"Where there is no vision the people perish"

THE POETRY REVIEW

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IN MEMORIAM:

T. WESTON RAMSEY, F.R.S.L.

(1892 – 1952)

President of the Poetry Society : 1948 – 1952

From a correspondent in *The Times*, Monday, 7th April, 1952:

"With the death of Thomas Weston Ramsey in hospital at Northwood on Saturday, 5th April, at the age of 59, poetry suffers the loss of a gifted and individual lyrist, an accomplished translator from the Italian, and a generous supporter of contemporary values wherever shown. The Poetry Society, over which he presided for the last five years, in succession to the late Earl Wavell and Lord David Cecil, will particularly miss his wise chairmanship of councils and the benefits of his advice, always so modestly proffered.

Born in 1892, he was educated at Dulwich College and London University. After a period as a modern languages master he joined the family firm, S. Ramsey and Co., wire workers, of Clerkenwell . . . Not until he was 42 did he publish his first book of poems, *Antares* (1934). This was succeeded by *Four Witch Balls* (1935), *Endymion to Silver* (1944), and *Fire and Ice* (1946); and three volumes still in manuscript, *Ballade in C Sharp Minor, Cameo* and *The Silver Key*. Last year appeared two broadsheets, *Friendly Tree* and *Far Over Wires*. The work by which he would prefer to be judged, the fruit of all leisure hours of recent years, his translation of Dante's *Paradiso*, while it is in proof now with the Hand and Flower Press, has yet to appear to seal his ultimate reputation, as I know he would be content it should.

A Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, Ramsey, in his busy dual life as man of literature and business, left many uncollected lyrics which are to be found in various anthologies; while a mass of his uncollected criticism awaits exhumation from the files of the *Poetry Review* immediately preceding the outbreak of war in 1939. He is survived by a widow, a son, and two daughters."

The Editor is requested by Mrs. Ramsey to express in her name, and that of her family, most sincere gratitude for all wreaths, tributes and letters received. They have been greatly appreciated, and acknowledged wherever possible.

The Editor also gratefully records the offer of poems in honour of the late President by Madge Hales, E. H. W. Meyerstein and Arthur Vivian. Pages being now so curtailed, the space for them has been devoted to the publication of the last three poems received from T. W. Ramsey, as he has no doubt their authors would wish.

THREE POEMS BY T. W. RAMSEY

★

BODY AND SPIRIT

The eyes of my body were filled with tears,
My spirit was calm and bright,
Surveying the dusty squadron of years
As a soaring eagle might.

Close my body lay, close to me,
My spirit lay closer still;
I heard its voice, secure and free,
Ring down the vaulted will.

Despise your body, the wise men said,
Its meshes are but a snare,
Over the warm blood set the head
And the lamp over the stair.

Despise your body, the fancied wise
Echoed, but spirit said, "Fool!
You see my face and my hair and eyes
Reflected in the pool.

You cannot sunder body from me,
Nor blood from the pulsing breath:
That sword sleeps across the knee
Of the great master called death."

I saw that body and spirit were one
As pattern is one with cloth,
The eagle gazed upon the sun,
The pool reflected them both.

And over the years and over the sky
The river of light spread
Serene in the joy of the eagle's cry
And the tears the body shed.

Swift as a stone the eagle fell
And ruffled the dancing water,
The fountain of fire rang out like a bell,
The tears were scattered in laughter.

The eagle has a voice of fire
That rings like quivering metal,
And every homeless wind conspires
To scatter the pool's petals.

But water is stronger than rock, they say,
As eagle is softer than stone:
Let them be bound together as day
Is tethered to time alone!

★

STORM

It comes with the speed of lightning shock
And dark as iron over the house,
The galleon roof-tops as they rock
To the swell will drag their anchors loose.

You stand unbending, firm as stone,
In the mutinous pride of flesh and bone,
While still the rush of the rain scattering
Drowns all but its muttered monotone;

And drowns the knowledge of sorrow in me
How barbed the lightning, how torn the tree,
How sweet the savour of herb that perishes
— Grass for my pillow, salt with sea!

It thrashes the window and roars in the gutter
And gurgles the words that the dead utter
Late at night on the lonely hill
— Rest a moment, my love, be still!

Rain puts not out the immutable spark
The star that blazes best in dark
— Look on the pillow, my love, and find it,
Twist the scarf and slowly unwind it!

Rain, storm and wind are passing things,
The hurricane's centre a point of rest
That over the pillow will close its wings
And lull your worst hour into your best.

YOU

You gave the wall and the lamp and the stair,
The fire and the wonderful coloured stuff,
You bore all that earth can bear —
You gave everything; it was not enough.

That tree that has its arms stretched out
Bears all the black coils of heaven
And knows her virtue and has no doubt
This is her end and her task given.

That so she might raise up a king
Out of the mixture of water and mud
And lift him high as the winds sing,
Illuminated with gall and blood

And crowned with a ring of piercing pain,
And raised on high for all to see,
You gave, and would give, and give again:
You never raised the dark tree.

OPEN LETTER TO THE READER

Sir, or Madam,

Our trail parts here. I must ride away. In December, 1948, my old "pardner" of poetry, T. W. Ramsey, an English Wyatt Earp, invited me to ride with him, the destination — Tombstone. For four years I supported him, as "Doc" supported Earp. I trust our cleansing efforts in Augean Corrals were not mere polishings in Golgotha.

Sir, or Madam,
I remain,
Although *in absentia,*
Yours still to command,
JOHN GAWSWORTH

Poetry

LEONARDO'S LAMENT

RACHEL ANNAND TAYLOR

"Ah! Not for me to choose a sovran theme
  For man's salvation or extreme delight,
Since those that came before me all supreme
  Concepts have filched from mine impoverisht plight.
Now like a penniless fool belated I
  Arrive to gloom at the once-glittering Fair,
Choosing among the trumpery cast-by
  Some tawdry toys to cheat my foiled despair.
With such rejections do I pile my pack,
  Contemptible pedlar, cheaping my cheap stuff
No sounding ducal cities ever lack,
  For artless hamlets hardly fine enough."
So, piqued by Time, he mused, whose princely style
Startled Firenze, Rome, Milan, the while.

ON A GREEK COIN

WILFRID THORLEY

This coin shows a character
Reining his horses as they rear;
  The sun sinks on the sky.
A thousand years ago 'twas conned;
In Corinth or in Trebizond
  It held the miser's eye.

Was it a wine-gourd or a ring
It paid for in hard bargaining
  When first in Greece it shone?
Bring not its beauty to the mart,
O miser; but allow its art
  And valour to live on.

SING, SING, MY SPIRIT!

LORD GORELL

Sing, sing, my spirit! Let my muse be found
In happy valleys where a merry sound
Is heard and harkened to! There is no room
Within the armoury of Man for gloom;
Too precious is Time's meed. I would not be
An owl of eerie hooting to the night
Or yet an eagle, sovereign lord of flight
In loneliness of grandeur: harmony
Is made of numbers and Man's life is crowned
With simple things, with buds and lyric lays
From weald and woodland, offerings of praise
In singleness of purpose, all the fun
That floats like thistledown about the earth
From harvest field and from the waste lands' girth
Both equally, from Love and laughter's power,
Exorcist of the weak and dreary hour,
Surges of wave and wind, the gift of sun —
No prize of princes but for every one.
Sing from the palace and the prison walls!
The mind must sorrow at the pains and griefs
That prey upon Mankind, the gross beliefs,
Crude shocks and evils, but the heart should be
A king triumphant throned on mastery
Of every mood that human hope befalls.

HORIZON

HUW MENAI

I feel the whole Earth moving
  As if I walked a wave
Revolving convicts' treadmill
  From cradle to the grave
Forever round the Riddle
  Same old eternal track —
There is no going forward
  In a world that's coming back!

XENOPHOBIA

FRANCES CORNFORD

There is a rope that holds us two apart,
I found it in the waters of my heart.
Its strands are ancient, salt and strongly-twisted.
Why did you make me know that rope existed?

SPAIN

(*After Gérard de Nerval*)

LEIGH HENRY

Land of my lovely Spains,
who could shun your skies, nor sing
of your cities, hills and plains,
and of your eternal Spring?

Your intoxicating air;
your noons, that your night outvies;
your fields, where God might repair,
should He leave His Paradise.

Once your lord, Arabia fled,
abandoning, as he went,
fit gem for your queenly head,
his crown of the Orient.

Yet echo evokes again,
around your enchanted shore,
the old, impassioned refrain
of the ardent vanished Moor.

UNDERSTANDING

ADELAIDE EDEN PHILLPOTTS

When I was young and little knew
Of sorrow sprung from loss of those
More dear than self — that cherished few
Who in our being's core repose —

It puzzled me to understand
How Grandmother, who could console
My deepest woes, herself unmanned
By grief and anguish when war stole
The sons in happy youth she bore,
Would not by me be comforted,
But bowed her head for evermore
Because her dearest ones were dead.
Now, old as she was when they fell,
I understand, too well, too well.

RAASAY

NAOMI MITCHISON

My curse on age
And the limbs' ache,
The skirt hiding
A lie of ankles,
A knee no longer
Wanting the brush
Of a kilt swinging.
I looked for a thing but I could not find it.

My curse on age
And the head's knowledge
That comes too late
For the heart's help:
On the lie of laughter
And the red fuchsia
In the grey hair.
I looked for a thing but I could not find it.

FROM JULIAN OF EGYPT

(Byzantine Poet of the Sixth Century, A.D.)

Translated by JACK LINDSAY

Love amid roses I found,
  Weaving a crown.
By his wingtips into wine
  I let him drop.

I took him up quickly
  I drank him down;
And now, inside, a tickling
  Of wings won't stop.

DEPRESSION

JOHN STEWART COLLIS

If now you can give nothing out
Be of good cheer.
Do not regret it
Nor be cast in sorrow
If to-day you feel
Like an empty cup
Or an unlighted lamp.
You need not fear.
It only means you are taking in,
And that to-morrow
You shall forget it,
The lamp shall glow
And the cup overflow,
Your soul's wings be unfurled
For a radiant journey
In some other world.

SEVILLE

RONALD BOTTRALL

Through silver olives
And busy orange trees
By the tawny Guadalquivir
Into the grave city's ear.
Under the Giralda, behind
Twisted iron grilles
Plain-song fills
The interstices of my mind.
I flower sunwards a camellia
And curl a dahlia
Into sleep. In the red
Sun I am cruel as a bull
A little black bull bred

In the Miura
Cruel as Pedro the Cruel.
My eyes are two fish
Swimming in the Moorish
Ponds, lazily moving
In a holy trance
With the cobra-headed dance,
With the fluttering
Winged hands and swirling skirts
Of the Sevillanas. Spurts
Over my face the hoarse
Spray of half-tones
From tense gipsy throats
Keening vibrated notes.
A guitar sighs
Frets and scrapes at my bones.
Thighs envelop me, thighs
Of fauns and capering goats
Loins light-spun.
Beneath a wolfish moon
All sounds all colours all scents
Strive at me
And naked without defence
I cannot reply.

THE SERPENT

PHOEBE HESKETH

Twining her conscience in a careful coil
Of words
His subtle tongue brought silence on the birds;
And promises fell drop by drop upon
Her ears like oil.
He breathed on bud-green thought, hour after hour
Till fancy flared into a crimson flower.

More fierce than month-long drought he ravished her
With thirst,
And sowed insatiate longing in her heart.
The sliding river shrank into its bed;
And a cactus bristled from dry lips of mud.
She sought cool leaves, but merciful shade was shed;
Only the Deadfruit Tree gleamed overhead.

He offered her a ripe, full-blooded fruit
Of rich barbaric red;
And biting into white flesh underneath,
She melted in the coil of his mind;
Drank his vine-cool, wine-inflaming words.
Blind to impartial judgement of the Sun.

Darkly her fate was spun,
She saw, but only beauty in his face;
Desire had cloaked the beast.
Plucking the rose and senseless to the briar,
She languished on the penetrating spine;
And tasting wine, drank poison in the feast.

Then coil by coil, mounting a spiral stair,
Ascended ecstasy towards the stars.
Till flogged desire sank voiceless on the floor.
Her fluttering soul, a heap of feathers, stirred
In a closer cage than one of metal bars;
And a gate clanged in her brain for evermore.

The crawling creature slithered from her cell;
And she, alone in darkness, heard her name
Ring out and crack the drinking cups of hell.

THE LOVE OF LAZARUS

RANDALL SWINGLER

The slickest ambush of the feeling heart
Lays bare the unresolved desire of death.
That other mouth moulding the labial moon,
Circean eyes, and curling temples with
Their witchery of hair, may melt his waxen
Speech: whose funeral kiss among the tombs
Still hangs about his flesh like a ghost-child
Begotten but unborn.
Oh how reclaim
The proffered life, in sight but out of reach?
Two snarling leopards guard the hidden gate
Where among ferns his form is printed light
The letters of a Chinese afternoon.

So love returns dejected to its fire:
The accursed huntsman, with his dogs
Scenting distraction under every hedge.

O flickering faith! This fortress of the lost
Is draughty harbourage when the harsh
And lambing wind bawls for a test of action
And plucks the dead-leaf flames out of your hearth!

IN LIVING SLEEP

PATRIC DICKINSON

You lay beside me rich in living sleep
Like a seed creative waking not to the sun
But waking as Milton to diurnal blindness —
A small and measurable incommodity
Being awake alive with *Paradise Lost.*

Without sleep we die. No, sleep is not like death,
Sleep is the common masterpiece of life;
Though death imagined
May fertilize sleep, as knowledge of real death
I know is enriched by dreams, and grief given room.
We sell rich acres of our farm of joy
When we deny grief; we build suburban shells
From which the senses, commuters to the city,
Miss not one day of mechanical occupation.

But let us write down of all our masterpieces
What we retain. What is our *Paradise Lost?*
Fragments of lines, vague images, hints of feeling.
How little lives in us — an inch of culture,
A surface of earth untilled, or a stone pavement
Where seeds lie begging for a little earth
And die slowly.
Yet in my inch of dream
I stood on a high cliff, like Milton's eyebrow,
And looked out with the darkness visible
Of his blue clouded eyes over the oil-black chaos
Of Authorized Genesis, and upon the surface
Sudden light-shafts made single peacock's eyes

That moved — so that I knew those waters raced
And the windless dark above kept pace with them.
And then I saw those waters part to disclose
A circle of ancient stones, a drowned symbol
Of older civilization, cold belief.

But one who was with me saw an emerald field
And a farm, smoking its after-supper pipe,
Rise from the sepia current, bright as day.

Without sleep we die, without pause for contemplation
Our loves and griefs die too, our senses reel
And crave for artificial sedatives.
How many dead we carry. Think of your love,
Your living masterpiece, now: how much of it
Is alive sleeping or waking creative seed in you?
Fragments of love, vague images, blunted feelings,
Habits of oblivion, holidays by a sea
You have named with your name and ceased to hear or fear?
Drown in your sleep, go down without one dream
Of your past joy to wake you to real life
If that is true! How much of all your work
Lives to bear fruit in body, mind and soul?

Our civilization is lost among dead things;
We have denied too much. Mass-suffering
Denies the integrity of private pain;
Mass-murder of war denies the birth- and death-bed,
The family gathered, the last human word,
'I die'
— As at the height of joy,
The lark-at-eagle height of human joy,
Lovers cry out in the dream of imagination,
The waking dream, their *Paradise Lost*,
'I die, I die' and sleep rich living sleep.

ENDING

MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH

Sleepless nights, hot tears and twisted pillow;
Each morning summer, every hour a birthday,

And the dove-coloured day preening across the window
Amorous and soft as a heap of feathers.
Heart never broke for this, ecstatic, tormented
Heights, when every step is one step only,
And when a voice, made its own echo, follows
Peopling the lonely hollow of the heart.
But heart breaks, when on a crossroad, sunless, deserted,
Two meet, and a step becomes a dead sound only,
A voice nothing but air beating on muscle,
A face only flesh, blocking, impeding light,
And what made tears and torments, peopled dreams,
Is boredom, drought, decay, till finally
Forever bereft of it, the heart, too, dies
Choked by the loveless blood that clogs its cave.

PHOENICIAN SHORE

HUGH GORDON PORTEUS

Against this coast, this desiccated crust,
The sea still brandishes a narrow blade
Turning across the past, across the lost.

This tarnished afternoon, a dying sun
Regilds the water, multiplying mauves,
As one by one the fishing craft return

With striped sea-gypsies in their stocking caps.
Then night; and stogged in sand, the Nubian column,
Acanthus capital, and shattered apse.

Discovered near, a Tyrian coin still shows
Obverse: a merman with uplifted trident;
Reverse: a Prince's predatory nose.

History: a pageant hoarded by the tides.
The young Moon rises. Turn your silver! Wish!
Perhaps a wave may change the magic slides.

To recollect some fragment man forgets,
Or bare the worn Sidonian superscription:
'A time to fish, a time to dry the nets.'

LANDSCAPE OF LOVE

GEOFFREY PARSONS

As mountains do, the ups and downs of love
Rise from the plains ecstatically steep
To summits whose sharp brevity of shape
Yields footholds few can venture and survive:
Difficult breathing in the rarer air
Accounts for more; yet others find they take
No pleasure in a once-arrived-at peak
But plant their flags and leave in search of higher.

Those few explorers who both can and would
Build for themselves a permanent abode
Upon some pinnacle, are much deceived:

The rock they take for solid in their folly
Flows, like a glacier, down, and they are moved,
House, hopes and all, back to the humdrum valley.

WHEN SWANSDOWN IS SCARLET

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS

When swansdown is scarlet, and roses are blue,
And florins lie thick in the fields as the dew,
When you find the persimmon can grow on the pine,
And the Usk and the Avon flow into the Rhine,

When the tiger consents but to spare the gazelle,
And beer bubbles up in St. Boniface Well,
When the crow in his sables croons soft like the dove —
It's then, oh it's then, you will meet with true love.

When priests are all pious, and wives are all true,
When lawyers love justice, and news is all new,
When the trade in silk purses crop-ears all the sows —
It's then, oh it's then you may trust to love's vows.

FROM CATULLUS : CI

Translated by G. S. FRASER

Far by strange folk and far by strange seas carried,
To your sad obsequies, O my brother, I come:
I come to bear you the last donation of death
And to speak, in vain, to your mute ash in an urn:
Since your dear self Fortune has riven from me —
Alas, dear brother, unworthily snatched away.
However, here are gifts, as family custom
Still hands them down, a gloomy funeral tribute.
Take them, wet, with a brother's tears still dripping:
And hail, my brother, and farewell for ever!

PERCHANCE TO SLEEP

ROBERT GREACEN

Another autumn spent; only the litter left
Of crumpled leaves in the night-dead street.
The unsleeping tides keep vigil now. We are on guard.
Listen to that irritating clock chime history away,
Imagine a future rising white as day.

Has autumn died then (what is the time now?)
With the tides in flood, as the clock strikes
And the mad dawn brushes the window pane?
(A regiment of thoughts invades the fevered brain.
Ah yes, all those and more while lying sleepless.)

To need the drug of sleep, but not to sleep;
To drug oneself but not to sleep.
To share a minute fraction of our modern guilt.

Then wait. Eventually the god will issue his decree
(It now doth please his gracious and majestic Power)
And sudden visions burn the angry night away.
At last the heavy eyelids flap and close,
Good-night, sweet prince; welcome, dear Morpheus!

THOMAS MOORE : 1789–1852

By JAMES STEPHENS

Every poet is a minor poet; some of them are minor all the time, some are not. These others have their moments off from the minorness of verse, and we remember them, in these moments, with love, and, indeed, with astonishment.

There is a thing which is not stated often enough — it is, that verse is very easy to write. Given the talent, it is much easier to write decent verse than to write sound prose, for prose is immediately spotted as no good when it is no good, but poor verse can pass for a time because people think it is difficult to write, and because it is rhymed and reckoned. There is that dog in our nature which we call doggerel, and it can yap and whine and gaggle in its own form like world without end, amen. It nearly always yaps about Love. Only birds make love nicely.

When one is asked to write about Thomas Moore the question of the minor poet arises, almost in majesty. He had lived so long, written so much, been adored so universally, and been such a good chap through every moment of that living, writing, and adoring, that one dislikes to question his credentials. He seemed such a champion in his time. He was a wit, a satyrist, a romantic, a patriot, a musician, and a lover: and he was all these in such astonishing abundance, and with such readiness to oblige, as only a champion can manage.

He is the champion minor poet of us all.

Poetry can become an habit, and every habit is a bad habit. An habit is an aptitude which saves us from hard work, and if you succeed in dodging hard work in verse, well, you have also succeeded in dodging poetry. There is, of course, great ease in good poetry, but it takes much hard work to make tough poetry seem light as gossamer, and airier than air. Light verse, on the other hand, gets a bit weightier per annum, and at last it is very little lighter than lead. The writers of it should be kept in jail.

Any discussion of Irish poetry must, of necessity, bring England into the matter. That there was distress between these nations need not now be stressed. Lack of sympathetic curiosity accounts for a large part of this trouble; and, indeed, it accounts for a large part of all human trouble whatever. On the whole, we are not sufficiently curious about each other. We take almost everybody for granted, and we dismiss her, him, and them — who are the neighbour — with the shallowest expression of regard, or disregard. If we were really capable of curiosity we should be really civilized beings, and we would take a great deal more care

of each other than we do. Curiosity is interest. Interest, carried far enough, is love. There is, in truth, no interest except where affection is.

It has been said that too many cooks spoil the broth, and it is just as true that too many cultures spoil the scholar. We in Ireland have suffered and are suffering from these too-manynesses. I was born and bred there, and it was a long time before I became aware of this obstructing too-muchness. England and France, Germany and Italy are, intellectually, undistracted countries. They have, each, a language and a literature which are the national inheritance, and they are completely at home in these. English was my first language, but, when I was about twenty, I was learning Irish as everyone else was. Shortly after that again I began to interest myself in English as a literature, and, actually, began to write in it. Then I became aware that we in Ireland were in possession of two English literatures. One of these was made in England and was 'the Chaucer to Tennyson' so justly world famous. The other literature, in English, was made in Ireland, and was only known to Irish people. I sometimes think that no English person has ever been sufficiently curious to read our Anglo-Irish literature and to learn something about us from it. It is a relatively large literature, for we had our own novelists and dramatists, and, in especial, we had our own poets.

Irish poetry is mainly a poetry of distress and anger and helplessness. This poetic contribution in English was curiously beloved by our people, even by our common people; and, with religion, its possession was our only culture.

The common people of other lands are rarely interested in the poetry of their country. They leave poetry, as one might say, to their 'betters', for poetry is always the gift and the pleasure of an élite in whatever nation. But I think that every grown person in Ireland knew by heart many poems, and was always ready to listen to many others, and to discuss, in terms of personal liking, the merits of dozens of verse-makers. Our poetry was 'popular' poetry, and all the above is a kind of apology for it.

The work of a poet in a dejected nation is very important to the nation, but it is *not* very poetical, for the poet is given a practical job of work to do, and while we do not know what the work of poetry is we do know that it is not 'practical'. A country is in a pretty serious condition when its poetry has to become national; when it has to become, that is, political and angry and defensive. The poets of such a country are almost prohibited from producing poetry. They have to produce instead the anger or the discomfort of the day.

Properly speaking, poetry has no subject, and, when it is forced to have a subject poetry becomes rhymed history and rhymed journalism. The 'subjects' of real poetry are the commonplaces — Nature and Beauty and God. These belong to every country and to every man, and they

are commonplaces because they are universals: but when Nature becomes one's country, when Beauty becomes one's violence, when God becomes one's defensive religion, poetry doesn't know what to do about it, and has to do just whatever it can. All parochial poetry, all national poetry, suffers from a spiritual under-vitality which is often not apparent, but is always there. This national Muse knows two dance tunes, and addresses her inspiration from the nearest Music-Hall.

When I was a youngster scarcely a week passed without our hearing someone recite or sing some of Moore's poems. He was never spoken of as *Thomas* Moore. He was always referred to as Tommy. (There is, as you know, a very great difference between Tommy and Thomas — Everyone loves the first and everyone wishes that the second had never been born). Most people in England, and everyone in Ireland admired Tommy, and ladies of what used to be called 'a certain age' adored him. Every person, of whatever sex, who could tap with one finger on a piano, tapped out Donezetti and Tommy Moore, and Puccini and Tommy Moore. Everyone who *could* sing, or *would* sing, sang Tommy Moore. He was among 'the gods' — and that is where no respectable poet should ever be. Countesses and concierges! There is something very dreadful in being loved by male and female females — these are 'the gods'. All that love-poetry! And all those people who think that love-poetry is poetry! Tommy was one of these. The world's worst poetry is Love-Poetry, the second worst is national-poetry.

Young people of my age began to wonder whether Tommy was the world's greatest poet or the world's greatest bore? When one is young, a bore is adequately described as whatever it may be that your uncle and your aunt loves most. That questioning by the younger generation is the hyaena that dogs popularity, and that one day drags it down. It is often enough unjust, but every generation must turn in self-defence from the too-great popularity of a Moore, a Byron or a Tennyson: and, again in self-defence, we are forced to forget what is noble and lasting in our artists, and to remember only that which is trivial, and of their age. Prose may properly be of its age, but poetry 'dates' at its peril.

Moore did a curious work for the Ireland of his day. He introduced her, in bare feet and a red petticoat, to the drawing-room and the boudoir. He made her romantic, but also, he made her feel as not quite neglected in the world or by the world. Lord Byron and Shelley liked him personally, and Byron, at least, approved of his poetry; also, Moore was simply and instinctively very proud of his country, and, even in head-turning popularity, he never let his country down. Perhaps he was a minor poet, but he was a good poet, and, in very especial, he was a good likeable man.

There was a genial weakness in the poets of that day — they all wrote poetry too easily. You could have walked at midnight into the bedroom

of Moore or Byron or Shelley or Rogers, or who-not else, with a pencil and a pad: you could have wakened them up, and you could have demanded and in five minutes received a poem from any one of them. Facility was the weakness of the poetry of that age, as it is the weakness of poets in every age, for the young poet too often and too long permits his Muse to go her own sweet way. He trusts her, and he does not even suspect that the Muse is the most actively-lazy wench that exists in created or uncreated ways. The Muse doesn't like poetry; she prefers rhymed couplets; and she loves 'doggerel'. You have to bring up your Muse in the way she should go, or she'll go doggo.

Much of Moore's poetry (and there is too much of it) is now unreadable, even by Irishmen, but there is still an amount which can withstand our hypercritical modernity. It happens that we possess a treasury of folk-music which is as abundant and as lovely as any music anywhere. This, and a very curious native mythology, are what Ireland has, and, in a sense, they are all that she has. Moore was a passably good musician, and he put words to some hundred of our tunes. His words are not as good as the tunes he put them to, but he did spread widely a knowledge of our music, and he did help his country in doing this.

Curiously enough he also set verses to many foreign tunes, and some of these are odd enough to be now remembered. Here, for example, is a poem he made to an Indian tune. The form and the sentiment are at once pessimistic and lovely: so much so that one wonders what the *tune* can be like which moved Moore to write in this fashion about a strange land, and a strange people. This is one of his best poems:

All that's bright must fade
— The brightest still the fleetest:
All that's sweet was made
But to be lost when sweetest.

Stars that shine and fall
— The flower that drops in springing!
These, alas, are types of all
To which our hearts are clinging.

All that's bright must fade
— The brightest still the fleetest:
All that's sweet was made
But to be lost when sweetest.

Who would seek or prize
Delights that end in aching?
Who would trust to ties
That every hour are breaking?

Better far to be
In utter darkness lying,
Than to be blessed with light, and see
That light for ever flying.

All that's bright must fade
— The brightest still the fleetest:
All that's sweet was made
But to be lost when sweetest!

The next poem is again pessimistic. There is nothing wrong with pessimism. Pessimism is that doubting and enquiring mind which forces us to examine Who we are, What we are, Where we are, and Why we are. These are sentimentalized when they become not an imaginative questioning but a personal complaint. We can be sorry for others, but, on the whole, we had better not be sorry for ourselves. We sentimentalize a half-truth, even an untruth, but 'tis rare indeed that we treat truth itself thus smugly. These lines were written when an acquaintance of Moore's died. She was young, she was beautiful, and she had just been happily married. Yet, within a couple of weeks she was dead:

This world is but a fleeting show,
For man's illusion given:
The smiles of joy,
The tears of woe,
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow
— There's nothing true but Heaven.

And false the light on Glory's plume,
As fading hues of even:
And love, and hope,
And beauty's bloom,
Are blossoms gathered for the tomb
— There's nothing bright but Heaven!

Poor wanderers of a stormy day!
From wave to wave we're driven:
And fancy's flash,
And reason's ray,
Serve but to light our troubled way
— There's nothing calm but Heaven.

Here is Moore being at once a lover, and a man of the world. We don't know whom the poem was written to, but it might bear as a title— 'Almost a Lover—Almost a Gentleman':

With all my soul, then, let us part,
Since both are anxious to be free;
And I will send you home your heart,
If you will send mine back to me.

We've had some happy hours together,
But joy must often change its wing;
And spring would be but gloomy weather,
If we had nothing else but spring.

Tis not that I expect to find
A more devoted, fond, and true one,
With rosier cheek, or sweeter mind
— Enough for me that she's a new one.

Thus, let us leave the bower of love,
Where we have loitered long in bliss;
And you may down THAT pathway rove,
While I shall take my way through THIS.

One of Moore's best-loved poems was written to a beautiful Scotch air. Who does not know, and love, 'Oft in the stilly night'. And here is Tommy Moore saying good-bye to himself in his own pessimistic, and courageous, and sentimental way:

Ah! Where are they, who heard in former hours
The voice of song in these neglected bowers?
They are gone
— All gone!

The youth who told his pain in such sweet tone,
That all who heard him
Wished his pain their own
— He is gone:
He is gone!

And she, who, while he sung,
Sat listening by,
And thought — to strains like these
T'were sweet to die
— She is gone,
She, too, is gone!

Tis thus, in future hours,
Some bard will say,
Of her who hears,
And him who sings this lay
— They are gone,
They both are gone!

Poets of North America: I

WILLIAM HENRY DRUMMOND, POET OF THE HABITANT

By SISTER MAURA
(Mount Saint Vincent College, Halifax)

William Henry Drummond is greater than his verse. The revelation of the man himself is probably his best achievement as writer, his sincerity, courage, and generosity, his sometimes rollicking humour, his warm kinship with nature and gift of sympathy. Life as he knew it in the wide countryside along the mighty Saint Lawrence, in its woods and wilds, in its towns and villages and clustering farms, all live, in his verse.

Drummond came to know the province of Quebec, city and farmlands first as telegraph operator and later as beloved physician. It might be said of him in the latter capacity that "He never visited a patient without making a friend." He was an observant lover of human nature who gave the poor preference over the rich. Once when calls clashed, he ignored the rich man. "So-and-so can get any doctor he wishes," he said, "but poor Pat has only me." He always enjoyed his intercourse with the lively French-Canadians — *habitants, voyageurs, coureurs de bois* — and soon turned his appreciation into verse. He wrote these genre studies to please his friends and often recited them at social gatherings. As they won a wider and wider hearing, he became known as the Poet of the *Habitant*. A prime favourite among them, *The Wreck of the Julie Plante*, is still popular with readers and anthologists.

The poem is characteristic. It tells, in the engaging dialect of the *habitant,* of the loss of a wood scow on Lac St. Pierre when

"De win' she blow from nor'-eas'-wes',
De sout' win' she blow too."

Its *Moral* sums up the *habitant's* logic of life:

"Now all good wood scow sailor man,
Tak' warning by dat storm
An' go an' marry some nice French girl
An' leev' on wan beeg farm.
De win' can blow lak' hurricane
An' s'pose she blow some more,
You can't get drown on Lac St. Pierre
So long you stay on shore."

As this new dialect poetry delighted its readers, an enterprising publisher, G. P. Putnam, brought out a well illustrated edition of it called *The Habitant*. Within ten years, three other books — *Johnny Courteau, The Voyageur,* and *The Great Fight* — followed; the last of them Mrs. Drummond published after her husband's death in 1907. That death was in character. Hearing that smallpox had broken out among the miners in Cobalt, Doctor Drummond hurried away to serve them though he was far from well himself. A week later he died at the camp of a cerebral haemorrhage. His tombstone on Mount Royal bears his favourite lines from Moira O'Neill:

"Youth 's for an hour,
Beauty 's a flower,
But love is the jewel that wins the world."

The title piece of *The Habitant* is a *Cotter's Saturday Night* of a poem, and it strikes the keynote of Drummond's work. The Quebec farmer who speaks — sturdy, contented, industrious — is of the same stock as Louis Hémon's Chadelaine Père and Eutrope Gagnon. In Drummond's day these cheerful *habitants* filled the fertile farmland on either bank of the Saint Lawrence, but to-day the province has become somewhat industrial-minded.

The *voyageurs,* unlike the thrifty farmers, fare forth and fare far. The Hudson Bay country, the Rocky Mountains, "the star of the Red Rivière" have heard their *chansons*. A detachment of them served as boatmen in the Nile Expedition, and of this Drummond's *Maxime Lavelle* gives a homely account. He sounds a note of special devotion to "Queen Victoriaw."

Johnny Courteau makes a vivid study of the *coureur de bois*. Johnny is a wild man on the mountain and along the river; when pay day comes,

"pullin' hees sash aroun' heem
He dance on hees botte sauvage
An' shout, 'All aboar' if you want to fight!'
Wall! you never can see de finer sight
W'en he go on lak dat on de w'ole village!
Johnny Courteau!"

But a change comes over Johnny when he marries Philomene Beaurepaire;

"She 's nice little girl was run de school
On w'at you call Parish of Sainte Ursule."

Johnny's wild days are over.

"He never come out on the evening,
No matter de hard we try,
'Cos he stay on de kitchen an' sing hees song:
'A la claire fontaine,
M'en allant promener,

J'ai trouver l'eau si belle
Que je me suis baigner!
Lui y'a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai.'
Rockin' de cradle de w'ole night long
Till baby 's asleep on de sweet bimeby,
Johnny Courteau!"

Drummond's quotation here did much to keep alive and make widely known a precious folksong.

Another interesting personality is a little Curé who brings to heel the tough parish of Calumette, Father O'Hara. He has the zeal of Chaucer's "povre Persoun of a Toun" but is more of a fighter.

"Hees fader is full-blooded Irish, an' hees moder is pure Canayenne,
Not offen dat stock go togedder, but she 's fine combination, my frien',
For de Irish he 's full of de devil, an' de French day got savoir faire,
Dat mak' it de very good balance an' tak' you mos' ev'ry w'ere."

Like the ballad-makers of old, Drummond tells a story to dance metres. He uses various stanza forms but is particularly fond of a double ballad stanza, written in four lines like this, in *How Bateese Came Home*:

"He say, 'Oh yass, dat 's sure enough — I know you now firs' rate,
But I forget mos' all ma French since I go on de State.
Dere 's 'noder t'ing kip on your head, my frien' dey mus' be tole
Ma name 's Bateese Trudeau no more, but John B. Waterhole."

He seldom treats such an historic subject as *Madelaine Verchères,* but almost always chooses from the life around him and offers his reader a rich variety of themes. *When Albani Sang*, for instance, memorializes with quaint humour the famous singer's tour in Canada. *Marie Louise* is a simple love story. *The "Rose Delima"*, *'Poleon Doré*, and *The Log Jam* tell of tragic happenings in the lives of *voyageurs*. *Ole Docteur Fiset* celebrates the country doctor, and *How Bateese Came Home* gives the entertaining history of "Jean Bateese Trudeau, dit Waterhole."

Drummond does not often write pure lyric, but rather a singing story like *The Grand Seigneur*; yet sometimes his verse sings itself. *Little Lac Grenier,* a love song to the little lake alone and high on the mountain, utters a cry of warm feeling. *Donal' Campbell* is a virile song of sorrow with the note of the pibroch sounding through it; *We 're Irish Yet* is all its name implies.

A phase of Drummond's work whose importance is more keenly realized now than when he was writing, is the folk poetry which enshrines legendary lore of the wide Laurentinan region. Marius Barbeau has quite recently published a book of Canadian folk tales in admirable French prose. These are chiefly transplantings from Europe which struck root in the new world; and Drummond's balladry is much the same, with several notable exceptions.

In *The Devil*, for instance, the final crisis is solved, not by a *deus ex machina*, but by strong and continued whiffs of *tabac Canayen*:

"An' oh! he never was sick before
Till he smoke tobac Bruneau —
Can't walk or fly, but he want fresh air,
So Louis put heem on rockin' chair
An' t'row heem off on de road out dere,
An' tole heem go below."

Certainly, a native climax to the Faust legend!

Bruno the Hunter gives Canadian setting to a European folk theme. It is a sombre ballad. Thunder rolls through it, and 'lightning spits like a trapped lynx' as the cruel hunter, transformed into a moose, crashes through the woodland pursued by his own black hounds in the shape of loups-garous. In *The Wendigo*, Drummond makes of an Indian folk creation, known from the Atlantic to the Pacific, a rather benevolent manitou living in the depth of a large lake. In the prairie provinces and in British Columbia, the wendigo is a grisly terror that roams the snowy wastes moaning like a child in pain, and lures travellers to their doom. Audrey Alexandra Brown has fashioned the theme into a poem of unusual beauty and horror.

Distinctively Canadian — Québecois, in fact — is *la Chasse Gallerie*, the great canoe that rides the wind on the *Jour de l'An* and brings dead men back from far places to visit their own *pays*. Drummond is at his best here. He creates an atmosphere of loneliness and dread and solemnity, though he finally dissolves the tension in laughter. A line of the poem can bear comparison with Coleridge's:

"One red leaf, the last of its clan,
Dancing as high as dance it can."

It is, "An' over de snow, de leaf dat die las' fall was chasin' itself." For those who have seen the leaf, this is perfect word-painting.

An unusual quality of sympathy marks Drummond's love of nature:

"Wan red fox he 's comin' so close, so close, I could ketch him wit' de han',
But not on de tam lak dis, ma frien', 'Marche-toi all de quick you can'."

It is, of course, observant:

"Las' night dey 're passin', de golden plover,
Dis mornin' I 'm seein' de bluebird's wing;
So if not'ing go wrong, de winter 's over,
An' not very long till we got de spring."

Now and then, Drummond shows his mastery of pathos, as in *The Last Portage* and *Little Bateese*, but his sense of humour is pervasive. Sometimes the two go together. His best in sheer comedy is, probably, *The Corduroy Road* and in farce *De Stove Pipe Hole*.

OLD AMERICAN STOCK

EVELYN SCOTT

The old man on the apple-barrel
Shut his jacknife and lay down
When they began to build the town.
He cautiously abandoned whittling
When the undertaker said:
"Please hurry! Here's a comfortable bed!"
And he stretched himself at length
To muse, instead, upon some *vis-á-vis*
Among the stars . . .
Since then, new city lights have blenched the clouds,
And people he remembered have all vanished from their shrouds;
And where, once, rustling corn, half-seen,
Caught, nightly, dim reflections from the windows
Of the general-store
And the illumined druggist's vials
Next door,
There are now other trials,
Accompanied by a stench of gasoline —
As filling-station salesmen guide a nation
Along routes designed for regiments in celophane!

And at the "World's Fair", New York, nineteen thirty-nine,
Neon signs and sputtering fountains glow
More brightly than the fronts of pharmacies
Of years ago!
And nixies burble
From loud-speakers by the lake,
Of late and modish cures for stomach-ache,
Or brawl — from the veranda of the "Hickory Bacon Palace" —
In praise of "Nibbly Candies"
That — in manufactury — translate "Alice"
Into a fresh "Wonderland",
And a vernacular the old man would not understand.

Once, among cracker-boxes, gingersnaps and farming-tools,
The cronies sat and cogitated, sighed and spat,
And left the rest to fools . . .

To-day, a crowd, amazed, gapes at the "Duffield Dairy" cows!
The "Red Queen", standing on a soap-box, vows
Raw milk is poison, and patent milkers
Pump depravity from herds subdued by "scientific" words
Unknown to elk and buffalo . . .

Still, we detect a smell combined of starch and calico,
Where "Mother-Hubbards" dangle in a row
From rafters, oscillating to a knell
Like ghosts of female suicides escaping Hell,
And returning to deride male counterparts
Alive and yet despised,
Outcast from liberal "modernne arts"!

Meanwhile, within the "Perisphere",
In mystic gloom,
Beneath the rondures of a Moslem's tomb,
The disembodied voice of Mr. H. V. Kaltenborne talks on
In understatement to the music of the spheres —
Or, rather, of the radio
Which gives our folk-ways punch and go! —
About our "marching youth"—
And someone offers samples of a roofing
Not to have been purchased in a country store!

And lanterns fixed in timbered grooves
Shake to the thud of horses' hooves . . .
A stranger — cynosure of philosophic eyes —
Comes in, slaps snowflakes from his thighs,
And pulls the gumdrop stopper
From the keg of kerosene.
Around, the winter listens
As men think
Tilt up the cider-jug
And drink . . .
And furtive drifts shift to and fro.
And none are mindful of the opera bouffe
That will immortalize the truth
Uniting "Comrade Stalin" and the advertising man!

For the old man on the apple-barrel
Closed his jacknife and lay down
When they began to build the town,
And had no use for him —

Whose careful meditativeness obstructed vim!
And he was thankful for a bed,
And for the coverlid December spread
Above him.
And when spring broke its crust,
He was glad of the dust;
For the earth was something he understood,
And his coffin, at least, was authentic good wood!
He was simple and plain
And his needs were not vain.
He has no wish to live again.

OF "ALFOXTON"

By TERESA HOOLEY

In your review of Mr. J. C. Hall's *The Summer Dance* (March-June issue) I am intrigued to find a reference to Alfoxton—"to which Somersetshire shrine Mr. Hall came and knocked, only to find that 'The house lies empty, even the mice are gone'."

I have no means of ascertaining the age of Mr. Hall, but if he found Alfoxton untenanted it must have been many decades ago. For some years previous to 1939 it was run as a country hotel. On the outbreak of War it was requisitioned to house a boys' preparatory School, evacuated from the South Coast. On the cessation of hostilities it was opened again as an hotel (I myself spent seven months there, from June 1946 to January 1947), and after that, with no time-lag, as a hostel for Holiday Homes, Ltd., a branch of the Lancashire and Cheshire Federation of Christian Endeavour Societies, who occupy it to-day.

I cannot help wondering if Mr. Hall knocked either very long or very loudly, whenever he happened to call.

Since I am writing on the subject; it seems to me to be a reproach both to Somerset and to English Literature, that not even the smallest plaque has been placed there, to mark the house where William and Dorothy Wordsworth spent so significant a year, while at Nether Stowey, a mile or two distant, Coleridge's unlovely little cottage has been purchased by the National Trust.

JULES SUPERVIELLE, THE POET OF TWILIGHT

By AGNES E. MACKAY

Jules Supervielle is the poet of twilight. We may picture him a tall shadow under the trees in the evening light, and we may be sure that he is conversing with the trees or with the spiritual shadows within his own heart.

O pins devant la mer
O poseurs de questions
Confuses et touffues,
Je me mêle à votre ombre,
Humble zone d'entente
Où se joignent nos âmes
Comme l'onde dans l'onde.

He is indeed, and he knows himself to be, the mediator between many different worlds; the poet of metempsychosis, of the metamorphosis of being, through which all things hold invisible communication. For there is a plurality of conceptual worlds; that of "les glaces éternelles" of the cosmic vision, this of the vast ocean with its submerged life, another of birds and trees and nature, and most real of all the inner world where the dead and death mingle intimately in the poet's mind with an immense creation of imaginary forms.

Oh, population de gens qui vont et viennent
Habitants délicats des forêts de nous-mêmes
Ton sol intérieur est là avec ses golfes et ses terres sans merci.

Moreover these worlds are interchangeable:

Nuit en moi, nuit au dehors
Elles risquent leurs étoiles
Les mêlant sans le savoir.

It follows naturally that our interpretation of external objects rests on our own conception of them. So too, in our absence things assume other aspects:

Quand nul ne la regarde
La mer n'est plus la mer
Elle est ce que nous sommes
Lorsque nul ne nous voit.

For each carries his own world within himself, and each failure of our vision is a failure of things as we see them:

Maid l'étoile se dit: je tremble au bout d'un fil
Si nul ne pense à moi je cesse d'exister —

Supervielle was born at Montevideo in Uruguay, and the cllimate of his poetry often reminds us of that earlier poet of twilight, Jules Laforgue,

who came from the same town. Certainly Supervielle grew up in the tradition of Spanish song and his early poems sometimes echo Lope de Verga. Other influences were undoubtedly Rimbaud, Whitman and rather specially Rilke. It was not until the age of forty-one that he found his full voice in *Gravitations* (1925). In this volume there are strong characteristics to which the poet has remained faithful. The most remarkable of these is a lyrical purity which he never sacrifices to heighten effects. He evokes the humblest things in nature; rain-drops, leaves, stones, and then in the same simple tone ranges through the universe to the furthest point of eternity.

In the first poem of this book "Le Portrait" written in memory of his mother, the poet says, that not finding any comfort in her photographs:

Je penche sur la source où se forme ton silence
Dan un reflet de feuillage que ton âme fait trembler.

and he constantly returns to this idea that the spiritual force of the dead remains with the living and is manifested in nature. For the world of shadow is interchangeable with the world of light:

Tout ce qui mourut sur terre
Rôde humant de loin la vie,
Interrogeant les ténèbres
Où se développe l'oublie,
Et les aveugles étoiles
Dont l'orbite est dans l'espace
Fixe comme l'espérance
Et comme le désespoir.

Thus Supervielle uses the whole universe as background to his thought. But he is little inclined to be elegiac in the traditional sense. It is in the living objects around him, in the little street, in the presence of animals and trees that he finds poetic evidence of spiritual metamorphosis. Indeed we may say that at this stage of his development he is more concerned with the dead than with death.

Et moi qui vit encore,
Seul autour de mes os,
Je cherche un point sonore,
Dans ton silence clos.

Like Baudelaire, Supervielle has dared to explore the "reeling emptiness of glacial eternity". But he knows that despair lies that way, and he turns from such agony to insist that man is the centre of the universe, and is in fact its epitome:

La mémoire humaine roule sur le globe, l'enveloppe
Lui faisant un ciel sensible innervé à l'infini . . .

But in spite of his preoccupation with such themes he is attentive to the secret revelations of "la terreur de l'ephémère à l'approche de la nuit".

For he never loses touch with the actuality of things seen, in which his poetry is firmly rooted.

Voici un peuplier qui me touche du doigt
Voici une cascade qui me chante à l'oreille.

The idea of the universe centering in man is more fully developed in *Le Forçat Innocent* (1930). Supervielle has been compared by French critics to the poet-philosophers of the sixteenth century, whose doctrines of microcosm and macrocosm led them to a state of cosmic ecstasy. But unlike the metaphysical poets of the Renaissance he does not easily accept man's place in the majestic hierarchy of the creation. For him the universe exists in man, and his poetry remains centred round man's organic life. Past memories, past desires, influence our thoughts and surround us with their presence: "rivières . . . brulantes et douces". The secret of life is in our own blood, our own bodies. But at the same time everything in the universe has significance for us, from the humble stone to the distant star. And there is a constant metamorphosis, and exchange between the outer and inner worlds:

Les pierres du chemin, ah comment se fait-il qu'elles soient devenues
Les yeux des cerfs errants, des biches et des loups.

Jules Supervielle is novelist as well as poet. His novels are vivid and essentially poetic. In *Le Voleur D'Enfants* (1926) and its sequel *Le Survivant* (1926) the remarkable and endearing portrait of le Colonel Philemon is a symbolic picture of the poet himself. And we follow with deep interest his strange nostalgic adventures, first in Paris, then on the high seas and finally in his well loved Urùguay.

L'Enfant De La Haute Mer (1931) is the story of a child born of the obsession of a sailor, and for ever captive in a solitary village floating on the immense desert of the seas. Here is all the mystery of space, the authentic shiver of the wilderness of ocean. Human solitude, and at the same time the sense of humanity in everthing and everywhere even to the furthest desolation; these two contrary ideas play important parts in Supervielle's work.

In *Les Amis Inconnus* (1934) the poet's solitude is densely populated by shadowy beings, animals as well as men, and he continues to converse with the dead to the finest point of perception:

Un reflet qui couche sous la neige
Ou l'envers du plus haut des nuages.

But now he also looks outwards and doubt assails him. Is not man surrounded by unknown friends: trees, animals and stars, which have each an independent life of their own in the world of nature?

Disparais un instant, fais place au paysage,
Le jardin sera beau comme avant le déluge
Sans hommes . . .

Nature may well reprove man for his lack of sympathy, his egoism and his preoccupation with a world of his own creation which has blinded him to other realities:

Le feuillage des bois entoure ma maison
Les bois ont-ils leur mot à dire là-dedans?
Notre monde branchu, notre monde feuillu
Que peut-il dans la chambre où siège ce lit blanc
Que peut-il pour cet homme et son bras replié
Il ne nous a pas vu, il cherche au fond de lui
Des arbres différents qui comprennent son language.

Man should associate himself with the things around him: "il faut savoir être entier dans une feuille, et la voir qui s'envole." For the poet lives too much in his imagination, sings to himself, and opens blind eyes to the actual world:

Pour chanter avec les fleurs
Avec le flot des cascades
Ce ne pouvait être toi.

Here, in considering the destiny inflicted on animals by man, the poet questions the fate which man himself suffers. Are we vis-a-vis to God as the bull:

Le taureau qui ne comprend pas ce qui se passe
Le mène-t-on à l'abattoir, il ne sait où il va comme ça
Et juste avant de recevoir le coup de mort sur le front
Il se répète qu'il a faim et brouterait résolument,
Mais qu'est ce qu'ils ont ce matin avec leur tablier plein de sang
A vouloir tous s'occuper de lui?

In such passages Supervielle's sympathy with animals reminds us of his great predecessor La Fontaine.

It is in *La Fable Du Monde* (1938) that this poetry attains its highest perfection. For now the intuitive and metaphysical philosophy which is its animating principle turns to the question of man face to face with the *au-delà*. The poet makes no direct attack on the idea of God, he is neither for or against the principle of deity. Nor does he lay aside the perfect simplicity of his very personal verse when singing of vast symbolic scenes. Here are the impressive opening lines:

Dieu parle.
Je suis dans la noirceur et j'entends ma puissance
Faire un bruit sourd, battant l'espace rapproché,
Alentour un épais va et vient de distances
Me flaire, me redoute et demeure caché
Je sens tout se creuser, ignorant de ses bornes,
Et puis tout se hérisse en ses aspérités.
Serais-je menacé par les flèches sans formes

De fantômes durcis dans de longs cauchemars.
Mais non, tout se précise en moi-même, je gagne!

There follows a description of the creation. But God is lonely in the centre of his universe, for "nul n'est plus seul que Dieu, dans sa poitrine profonde", and so he creates man, as the poet makes his poems:

Je le tâte, je le tâtonne
Je le forme sans le vouloir
Je me le donne, je me l'ôte.

Yet although God has created the world he cannot remain responsible for its development. Already man has an independent life. It is too late for his creator to intervene.

Hommes, mes bien-aimés, je ne puis rien dans vos malheurs
Je n'ai pu que vous donner votre courage et les larmes
Il faut vous en tirer tout seuls comme des orphelins dans la neige.

If God exists he is himself incomplete, unsatisfied; and incapable of controlling the immense forces which he has put in motion, he asks for man's pardon. For man finds the sense of divinity in a divine conception of humanity threatened by catastrophe.

In *Poèmes 1939-1945*, Supervielle abandons metaphysical heights to consider the melancholy realities of an exterior world tortured by war. Here many themes of the earlier poems are resumed, lit now by a rich experience; and though "plus humble chaque jour, de tout ce que je quitte", the poet has not lost his freshness of expression.

Je remonte le temps pour t'être semblable
Petit visage d'enfant inconsolable.

For now "le soleil n'a plus rien à nous dire de clair . . ." And here again, among the memory of other loves, he keeps his endless love of trees.

S'il n'était pas d'arbes à ma fenêtre
Pour venir voir jusqu'au profond de moi,
Depuis longtemps il aurait cessé d'être
Ce cœur offert à ses brulants lois.
Dans ce long saule ou ce cyprès profond
Qui me connaît et me plaint d'être au monde,
Mon moi postume est là qui me regarde
Comprenant mal pourquoi je tarde et tarde.

All that is strange and solitary is loved by this poet whose song is penetrated by the mysterious union of humanity with the universe. He looks up and the trees nod and beckon to him, he looks down and the stone warms to his glance, he turns his head, and as he says in a recent lyric:

. . . une rose se prend
Au piège et la voilà qui tourne aussi la tête
Et jusqu'à l'horizon plus rien n'est comme avant.

HERMANN PESCHMANN

REVIEWS

Ezra Pound and the Cantos, by Harold H. Watts (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 12s. 6d.).

The Open Night, by John Lehmann (Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 15s.).

Harold Watts's book is a study of Ezra Pound's philosophy and beliefs of which he rightly sees *The Cantos* as the fullest, most mature, and most difficult expression. It confirms what Pound's letters revealed: his impressive singleness of aim and his essential integrity — in both senses of that word. Pound's departure from America to Italy, his flight from the poetry and culture of the present and recent past to those of periods or societies remote in time or distance, are one with his "treasonable" war-time broadcasts and with the seriatim publication of *The Cantos*. In each case the motivation was a violent revolt against capitalist-democracy and the place that usury holds in our modern economic systems: "No longer does man work to get his own vine and fig-tree; gilt-edged, interest-bearing bonds are a better protection against wind and weather". The only two relatively good societies he could find in the modern world were Fascist Italy (with Mussolini's anti-usurious reforms) and the Catholic Church. The rightness or wrongness of that opinion is not here in dispute. What does emerge, however, is that while usury and its deadening cultural effects are prime evils in the modern world, they are not the only evils; and their eradication would do much less than Pound supposes to transform society. The failure to realize this gives a certain shrillness on a single repetitive note to *The Cantos*; and Pound tries by English approximations to the Chinese ideogram — that is by the juxtaposing, without generalization, of objective studies, cameos of the good and bad life in different ages, countries and societies change, to develop in us an intuitively right approach to those "ideas in action" that make up our daily life. Significantly, to him the most important of the ideograms is the one that he renders "Make It New". In a word, the purpose of *The Cantos* is hortatory — propaganda for the good, i.e., anti-usurious, way of life. In spite of what Mr. Watts calls, not very happily, "a technique of disavowal", Pound *is* intensely involved behind his masks and his theories.

This dichotomy in Pound, and his refusal to make any generalization or abstraction of a programme (because that is the very debasement of thought and language he is fighting) are what make for some of the peculiar difficulties in any constructive apprehension of the poem. The other difficulties — the knowledge of French, Italian, Latin, Greek, etc., required to understand many sections; the opaqueness of those where untranslated Chinese ideograms are used: all these things which so

drastically limit the range of Pound's appeal and influence are left untouched by Mr. Watts, and their omission is not a light one: they must play a large part in our assessment of the ultimate significance, the potential universality, of the poem.

Mr. Lehmann's aims, too, are similar to Mr. Pound's, but he has a totally different conception of the way they should be achieved. This collection of essays, mainly on twentieth-century writers now dead, takes its title from *Lear;*

> "Here is the place my Lord, good my Lord enter,
> The tirrany of the open night's too rough
> For Nature to endure". (*Storme still*).

They are intended, collectively, to be "the exposition of an attitude towards literature and life, shaped by the nature of the world we live in, and the late hour to which the hands of history point"; and like Pound he denounces "the appalling failure of Western civilization to fulfil its promises and justify the untold human sacrifice and effort that has gone to its making in a century and a half of industrial expansion and competition".

But that the root of that failure lies in "industrial expansion and competition" being only made possible by widespread "usury" has not entered into his conception; and in general these essays are, in fact, a championing of those abstract ideals which Pound sees as both the root and flower of our capitalist-democratic decadence.

Besides general essays on "The Search for the Myth" and "The Poet in the Modern World" (vague generalizations that Pound would abhor), there are perceptive studies of Virginia Woolf, Yeats, Rilke, Joyce, Edward Thomas, one of the best analyses yet of why Rupert Brooke was essentially only a minor poet, Henry James, Proust and Conrad.

There are occasionally rather silly, sweeping statements. When he writes "it is only when political collapse, alien gods or revolutionary knowledge destroy the basis of such societies (i.e. the medieval Christian world) that poetry comes into its own," we not unreasonably ask: what of Dante or Virgil, or, in a different order, Pope? But such lapses are exceptional and most of the studies, especially of those figures like Virginia Woolf or Edward Thomas with whom he feels an especial sympathy, are informed with imaginative penetration and sensitive vision.

HERMANN PESCHMANN.

This Unlikely Earth, by F. Pratt Green. *A Time to Speak*, by Gwyneth Anderson. *The Outer Darkness*, by Thomas Blackburn. *The Crossways*, by John Alden. *The Return*, by John O'Hare. (Poems in Pamphlet: Hand and Flower Press, 1s. each.)

Always elegant in production, these little volumes maintain a decent standard, also, of performance. The prevailing tone of *This Unlikely Earth*, dedicated to our late President, is one of delicate mysticism:

> The Lamb and the Dove shall prevail
> And the seven wounds shall heal,
> And the light of a man's self
> Shine through his finger-anil.

In a less rigorous mood there is a long and engaging poem addressed to a friend under the title *One Minor Poet to Another:* "Dear Minor Poet, Major Friend . . ." which uses gracefully an unusual verse form. Miss Anderson's work I found slightly less achieved, though *A Time to Speak* contains at least one very beautiful lyric: "I will pretend no more." This I should have liked to quote in full to disclose its tremulous metrical pattern, and accomplished climax. There are other readable poems here, but I think it fair to remark that Miss Anderson's radical fault is a certain dull muted quality of language. What she has to communicate is often very interesting. Mr. Blackburn is, like F. Pratt Green, a poet in whom the religious sense of life is strongly developed; but he is far more objective in method and his response to experience is correspondingly wider and more vivid. This embodiment of insight is clearly visible in a series of poems on New Testament subjects: *Pentecost, Lazarus, Good Friday,* and in the wierd mysticism of *The Thing,* rankling as it is with images of horror and dissolution:

> severed hands.
> Crawl up and scratch the meaning on a wall.

By far the most remarkable poem of a remarkable first book is a strange incantation *The Spirit Dances*. This recalls in atmosphere — its subject is Pentecostal — that ecstatic hymn in the apocryphal *Acts of John* where the Saviour calls on His faithful to begin their last ritual dance before He is taken by His betrayers. "Thou that dancest, perceive what I do, for this is the passion of the manhood which I am about to suffer." By a series of dramatic repetitions, by skilled interior rhyming, the fluid recurrent nature of the dance is itself suggested:

> "They shall all come and you too shall come,
> My people shall come and Hell shall be harrowed.
> I touch you, I touch you, the spirit is running
> To you and through you the tongues are descending,
> You cannot escape them, and No shall be Yes and

Yes shall be No and Hell shall be harrowed.
And Hell shall be harrowed, I touch you, I touch you
And through you and to you I weave in between you;
The blind are the seeing, the lame are the dancing . . ."

It is a poem which demands to be read aloud, and which is almost a rite itself. Mr. O'Hare, whether truly a son of Inisfail or no, seems to express some of the Irish virtues where verse is concerned; there is fluency, metrical virtuosity and the primary emotions are faithfully recorded. The general tone of *The Return* is far more exuberant than that of the other pamphlets and it is, in a certain sense, a relief to turn to this poet who expresses genially or wistfully, these simple, but not superficial feelings. *The Crossways* is distinguished by variety, sense of place and human situation and a controlled richness of language. *Lao Tzu,* for instance, is a portrait at once wry and tender of that ancient mystic, "the Old Fellow", set firmly in a definite place and time. He gladly resigns himself, in Mr. Alden's poem, to "the perversity of the men of Chou", accepting the necessity of losing "himself and His Way in the dusk of a Demi-God-Head . . ." among the silences of the desert *numen.* In another vein *Old Moore's Prophetic Lamentation in Doggerel over the Coming Fate of Society* retains all the ambiguous charm of its title and there is an interesting paraphrase, too, of the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus. Mr. Alden is a resourceful writer whose future work I shall await with interest.

Although the policy of printing only poets who have not appeared in volume form is perhaps a dubious one, these pamphlets compare very favourably with the books issued by larger publishers and, indeed, the whole series should be read and enjoyed.

IAIN FLETCHER.

A Treasury of Jamaican Poetry, Selected and Edited by J. E. Clare McFarlane (University of London Press Ltd., 5s.).

Savitri, Book IV, Canto. 1 by Sri Aurobindo (Sri Aurobindo Asram, Pondicherry. Re. 1).

King Nala and Princess Damayanti (from the Tamil of Puhalendi Pulavar), by Maurice Langton (The Christian Literature Society for India, Madras, Rs. 3 4).

An Acre of Green Grass, by Buddhadeva Bose (Orient Longmans Ltd., 7s. 6d.).

Jamaica comes late to the literary festival of the English language. The beauty of these "West Indian Islands, in their romantic Caribbean setting" has found voices for not much more than twenty years, but the best of them have been gathered in Mr. McFarlane's *Treasury.* Let us give glad welcome to this young treasure. With the Island's "air like champagne" and natural beauties defying a Shelley or a Keats to sing

them, it is still in the way of human experience that inexperience should try. Thus is it that about one third of this offering is a panegyric, the second third a paean, and the remainder although anxious to bring through a deeper note, is still tangled in the Island's imponderables. The Mocking Bird must surely be an enchanter to have inspired a sustained flight of worthy performance in the patterns of Shelley's *To the Skylark* by H. Gillies Clerk. In her noble failure with *The Harvest*, Dorothy Whitfield appears to have struck a chord of history the absence of which in the other fifty or so contributors underlines how smugly the English-speaking twenty per cent of Jamaica's population are unconscious of their fearful past.

How much is conveyed to the English mind by the title, *Savitri*, which is the name of a Hindu Goddess? How much more is conveyed by the sub-title, *A Legend and a Symbol?* Here in Book IV Canto 1, we have a sample of some 340 lines of the late Sri Aurobindo's blank verse. Take it for what essentially it is — poetry.

> Then Spring, an ardent lover, leaped through leaves
> And caught the earth-bride in his eager clasp;
> His advent was a fire of irised hues,
> His arms were a circle of the arrival of joy . . .
> At his touch, life's tired heart grew glad and young;
> He made joy a willing prisoner in her breast.
> His grasp was a young god's upon earth's limbs.
> Changed by the passion of his divine outbreak
> He made her body beautiful with his kiss.

How refreshing to have this "carnal" focus on a saint and sage of Aurobindo's world-eminence! In total impact his blank verse — thousands of lines — is Miltonic.

One of the world's great love stories, the story of King Nala and Princess Damayanti has been rendered into English verse by the Rev. Maurice Langton. Impossible for one not a Tamil to say how far the essence, form and flavour of the original Tamil verses have come over. The somewhat elaborate structure of the English verses and the abounding archaisms are claimed by the translator as being crucial to the linguistic transposition. Not for us to demur. The story reads well in slow motion.

Modern Bengali literature is a pasture in its own right. Perhaps this is *An Acre of Green Grass?* Some of us know how green is that valley. But, again, how can we *discuss* that *greenness* with others full of their own greennesses? Thus it is that Mr. Bose's first sentences in his first essay — on Tagore — must strike the English reader as extravagant. And much that follows concerning later Bengalis who have made a vital new literature, alas, may share the same fate.

FREDOON KABRAJI.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OF MRS. GALLOWAY KYLE

Sir,

Many members of The Poetry Society will have been sad to read of the death of Mrs. Galloway Kyle, for they had experienced her warm personality. They did not all know, however, of the very large amount of almost unremunerated work she did behind the scenes to help the Director. Especially during the two World Wars, when clerical help was hard to obtain, she gave liberally of her time and labour in the exacting task of addressing envelopes for the *Review* copies (then numbering about 5,000), despatching trade parcels, collecting and recording members' subscriptions, etc., often working all night to get everything kept up to date. The business side of The Poetry Society and *The Poetry Review* were her special interest and care, and to this work she brought her many capabilities and a lively energy. She and Chevalier Galloway Kyle escaped with little but their lives when they were bombed-out in Featherstone Buildings (the early home of *The Poetry Review*) and came to live over our present Headquarters. Here they braved the remaining war years, carrying on their work in spite of several "near misses". Those like myself who had the privilege of Mrs. Kyle's friendship will always be the richer for it and remember her as one who was very generous both of heart and hand.

I am, etc.,

EVELYN D. BANGAY

POEMS IN PAMPHLET : PETER RUSSELL

Sir,

In view of certain statements made by Dr. Leigh Henry concerning my publication of Peter Russell's pamphlet (No. 8 of the POEMS IN PAMPHLET series), perhaps you will be good enough to allow me space for the following statement — that the conditions for publication were made perfectly clear, both by leaflet issued to all who made enquiries and by the statement contained on the cover of each pamphlet, and that I had absolutely no knowledge of any prior publication by Peter Russell under a different name, done by any other press until *after* the publication of his pamphlet, when, regrettably it was too late to do anything about it.

I am, etc.,

ERICA MARX

(The Hand & Flower Press)

Contemporary Mood: Poetry

WHITE PAEONIES

CELIA RANDALL

They were too frail to stand a breeze's riot;
It passed, but scattered all their faultless bloom,
And left on the paved path these petals, quiet
As marble children sleeping on a tomb.

TO CLAUDIA

(five weeks old)

MERTON NAYDLER

Darling, the day is not far distant
When you will kiss your fingertips
To the winds of evening,
And with pursed lips will in an instant
Summon again the strong swan
To fly where you have bidden —
Outdistance the far ships
Borne upon his silent back,
Between the wild wings beating.

There you, neither awake nor sleeping,
Will sweep your cloak through all the dark heavens
And jingle the stars in your handkerchief . . .
Plunge suddenly to the quilted sea,
And bubble past the dolphins, unforgiven . . .
Race up steep mountainsides
Leaping the helpless clouds;
Rob the fierce eagles, smiling;
Enchant the larks and gaily snatch their song
Yet leave them life,
Whole worlds, whole worlds beguiling.

Not far distant the day,
Darling, not far away.

SAINT MARTIN'S BAY

A. T. MILLER

Drowsily the sea stirs in pouting ripples
Towards the high walls of the cliff,
Clad in the bright hues of summer-stipples
Of flower and leaf, a patterned motif
Tinged now with light; while in the sun
The insects hymn their perennial song
Of praise and gratitude to the One
Whose bounty, freely given, asks no long
Bondage, makes no claims save: "In turn give
To others — so that all may live."

CONSOLATION

OSWELL BLAKESTON

Saintly Prometheus, blessed of thieves,
You gave to mankind
Sole joy they may find,
Heavenly bonfire, tobacco's leaves.

We regretfully record the death, at the age of 82, of

MR. LESLIE GREENE

(11th April, 1869 — 23rd March, 1952)

Sometime member of the General and the Executive Councils of the Poetry Society, the lyric writer of '*Tis Only a Rose, Dream Time in June Time, Come to My Garden of Roses,* etc., and a loyal, devoted and enthusiastic member of many years standing.

THE GREENWOOD PRIZE : 1951

ADJUDICATION REPORT

By WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

The common experience of "Greenwood" judges that only a small proportion of entries qualify for serious consideration has again been the case. Many revealed a complete absence of poetic discernment and technical ability, while a large number showed something of the one without the other. Others apparently assumed that a haphazard scrambling of thought and phrase cut up into long and short lines will serve to express personal emotions, religious feelings and random observations on society and nature. And this was true not only of many pieces that rhymed and scanned but of those more numerous items in blank or unrhymed "free verse", slapped together without genuine feeling, conviction or design. This kind of practice is a harmless enough private foible in a cultivated community, but any attempt to gain the distinction of first place and a prize of £20 deserves better attention and preparation and I suggest that competitors should combine a sense of humour with self-criticism before posting their entries.

That grumble over, I can say that a line-by-line examination of each entry reduced the number to about twenty worthy of closer attention. From these I unhesitatingly selected *Journey Towards Ireland,* by Miss Elisabeth Cluer, of Heron's Ghyll, Uckfield, Sussex, and awarded it the Greenwood Prize for 1951. This is both a narrative and a travel poem, but it is more: it is a tender and shining statement of personal experience, confidently evoking the historic past and the transient present. It has form, a definite shape sprung from the union of a deeply sensitive spirit with a mind of crystal modernity — a mind that is creatively aware of tradition and alert with wit and symbol to explore new ways of communication. If Hazlitt is right in his general notion of poetry, "that it is the natural impression of any object or event, by its vividness exciting a voluntary movement of imagination and passion, and producing by sympathy a certain modulation of the voice or sound expressing it", then the winning poem handsomely excels in his requirement. How strikingly Miss Cluer expresses in her first line, "Strangeness is gone from the map of England," what we have all at some time felt through the overlaying of old significant place names with latter-day associations and personal familiarity. The freshness of the enchantment goes; only once could Keats look into Chapman's Homer and receive the accolade of wonder:

> ". . . the young green wheat of expectation
> suddenly is corn, as knowledge was."

The poet is on a train journey, one telescoped for the eye of imagination, so that a few scenes only are hinted and sufficient, the Long Mynd, Church Stretton railway station, the timbered gatehouse and the square tower off the Ludlow road, and "eternal Stokesay" where, in "a seven-centuries' breath" as the train and Time slip past, "the moment falls into the glass of memory." Miss Cluer uses the same allusive method to show us the Welsh Marches, Shropshire, the Clun highlands, the Manchester Ship Canal, the docks, gangways and gantries, the loch among the Antrim hills and "home" with its memories of "hot raspberry afternoons, rhododendrons in rain" and currant bread baked in time for tea. And then, in a delightful passage redolent of smoke and steam and bustle, she confides to us that "the sensuous knowledge begins by association at Euston." As to the technique employed in this poem, it is cunningly compounded of natural rhythm, unobtrusive rhyme, half-rhyme, assonance, internal rhyme and a general subtle emphasis of sense and sound, all combining to declare the poet's assurance in her craft. I thank the winner and congratulate her on her distinguished poem.

My choice for second place is *Hall of Many Mirrors* by Mr. John Hartcup, a work of 237 lines divided into thirteen sections which aims at a combination of the profound and the epigrammatic and proceeds irregularly along the debatable modernist territory between prose and verse. I have seen no previous examples of this writer's work but his entry has interested me enormously, not only for its essential brainwork but for the many indications of poetic sensibility — nonetheless real though trimmed and disciplined almost to the point of suppression. Mr. Hartcup himself seems to be aware of this tendency:

> "Application of mind means the exclusion of the spontaneous
> And the anchoring of self to narrow opportunity.
> Only in feeling is our surest guide,
> In contemplation which directly springs
> From birds and flowers or the chameleon sea,
> Or in the forest of a grassy bank, if we have time to lie
> And watch the waving pinnacles of green
> In the vast world of insects creeping by."

"If we have time to lie" — there we have it, the impingeing of the unquiet modern world with all its clashing affirmations and denials, in which the artist tries to ape the scientist and feeling is tied in knots of contradictory speculation. Indeed, Mr. Hartcup leaves me with a sense that he has conscientiously mishandled a great theme. Nevertheless he has written an ambitious and resourceful poem which deserves particular attention.

My choice for third place is Miss Carla Lanyon's *The Countryman,* a poem of 246 lines which displays notable powers of feeling and expression. The theme, dear to English poets in all ages, is the delineation of a character near to nature's heart, one who marks the diurnal round and the seasonal changes:

> ". . . close to the white-hot heart of the plan
> In his own fields at work — the countryman."

But Miss Lanyon's is an exceptional countryman; he "fathomed the futility of war" by watching the sea surge up to the shore and then retreat; the spectacle of starlight on snow had taught him that:

> ". . . to match man morality
> Beside divine goodness is to go
> In danger of damnation."

Having walked among anemones and waded through kingcups his mind had achieved "a just balance of values" and come to the realization of the limit of man's cleverness, — all which might be called the pathetic philosophic fallacy. A too-allusive manner in places does the poem a disservice; the reader is not told what happened and the key to the character is lost. But by and large the indwelling feeling of serenity in this poem, with its sheer pictorial power, makes me Miss Lanyon's debtor. Although essentially lyrical in impulse she has cooled and compressed her verse into an effective medium of statement.

For fourth and fifth places I choose two sea poems — Mr. James Kirkup's effortless *The Sea Bird's Death* and Mr. J. Chiari's *Journey Under the Sea.* Mr. Kirkup's is a calm yet poignant account of his discovery of an Arctic tern on a wintry beach, "its torn wings gummed and black with oil", and of how his effort to reach and succour it was defeated by successive waves. Though a poem of severe economy it is warm with human feeling. Mr. Chiari, French-born but with English as his literary language, achieves weird and fantastical effects in a drowned sailor's tale of his ship that put to sea on a Thursday against all advice and sank in a storm. Very cleverly the poem creates a glaucous world of water, in which the wreck lies with its crew of salty shapes presided over by the figure-head of a black Venus head downwards, and overhead the sails floating like immense green leaves. I welcome this poem for so sharply arousing an imgainative response.

Sixth, I place Mr. W. A. B. Gardener's grim poem of protest, *Slaves*, which expresses with a terrible iteration — "from our sterility we breed" — the truth that personal as well as general freedom, like peace, is indivisible. This is a poem of 75 lines in five equal parts. It is hard and hammered as though wrought in a furnace of pain.

Many entries have given me much interest and satisfaction and among those I would specially commend are: Mrs. Juanita Peirse's *The Converging Moments*, a sincere and original comment on human preoccupation with Time; Mr. Robert Armstrong's attractive blank verse poem occasioned by his visit to the Balearics last summer, *Majorca*, in which he fuses scenic and historical impressions of the island and the town of Pollensa; Mr. Terence Heywood's infinitely ingenious and scholarly long rhymed poem on everything pertaining to swans and their verbal, pictorial, topographical and other associations, *Swan-Upping*, with its 86 footnotes; Mr. Edgar Proudman's excellent blank verse narrative of the young De Quincey's befriending by a London prostitute, *Ann the Outcast*; Mr. R. R. Bramham's attractive interpretation of a painting by Orpen, in Dublin, *On the Irish Shore;* Mrs. Phoebe Hesketh's tender and philosophic poem on a drowned boy, *The Quenchless Flame*, wrought with her customary care and resource; Andrew Keith's romanticised treatment of one of the immortal tales from the Greek mythology, *Orpheus*; Mr. George Moor's happy modern pastoral on an encounter of a West Riding cyclist with a farmer's daughter, *The White Kid*; Miss Wrenne Jarman's ambitious long rhymed poem on England, *The Inward Greatness*, informed with classical feeling; Miss W. M. Letts' charming poem of a Tudor house in Kent, *An Englishman's Home*; Mr. Geoffrey Johnson's long piece of lyrical whimsy, *The Man Who Walked in Fairyland*; Miss Morwyth Ree's tale of an imprisoned damsel haunted by the nightingales of Starhasy Common, *Philomela*; Mrs. Barbara Baker's Vachel-Lindsay-like poem of *The Jungle* with its colour and heat and drumming stresses; Mr. A. E. Dodd's celebration of Earth's and Man's partnership in the cosmic scheme, *Except a Corn of Wheat*; Mr. Leonard Warlock's contribution to the always unfinished Helen of Troy anthology, *All Waves to Helen Lost*; and, finally, Mr. John Wheatley's rhymed apologue of one who ran up the gamut of dreams, *The Sequence of Dreams*.

It will be seen that 1951 was, on the whole, a good year.

★

JOURNEY TOWARDS IRELAND

By ELISABETH CLUER

Strangeness is gone from the map of England:
not cowslip meadow or the deep water
suddenly at a turn of the path,
not the bare hill with the beech grove on it:
but the bare names, the Viking roughness,
the Roman echo, the Watendlath,
Coldharbour, Whitehaven, Devil's Gallop,
Long Mynd and Higgar have lost the breath
indrawn of a long anticipation:
bone of my bone they change with my changing,
their better acquaintance is a kind of death.

I have looked at the map, and suddenly my heart
was empty and ached with a thin pain
at the piled contours, the mountain spaces
no longer guessed at, the river veins
etched on the memory: imagination
faints and fades when the vision's plain.

The first glance into Chapman's Homer
first sunset under a new moon
first contact with the name, the sound of it
gentled and bridled by an eager tongue
go galloping into the middle distance:
the foreground's empty, the turf worn.

(Only by re-creation becomes the
morning dew like dew on the grass
in the morning of anticipation:
the name's repeated magic falters
with repetition: virtue is gone out of it,
the moving shadow is off the grass
and the young green wheat of expectation
suddenly is corn, as knowledge was).

Long shining bands of rail slip round rough breasts
of the Long Mynd: but the watcher knows
the neat clean station of Church Stretton,
the stones on the path, the heather, the toes
stubbed on the burnt out shell cases:
No Teas, but the bitter beer at the Rose.

In mellow and medieval light the gatehouse
black and white — black and gold in the low sun —
and the dun tower, hardly as silent, as solid,
stand like a breath by the railway:
a seven-centuries' breath, abruptly embodied:
in a twentieth-century field against jeep and hedgerow
they suddenly cast their spell.
Here is the touch of death
reversed into re-creation, though men have mouldered
horribly upon these towers, beneath these walls: yet there is mellow
and kindly air about them as the train slips
past, and the moment falls
into the glass of memory, and Time slips past them

on shining rails, and innumerable veils fall
between eternal Stokesay and the present
muddy trace of a moat and the empty hall.

This is border country, from Bristol to Chester;
the coloured counties define themselves at the milestone.
You could fall into sleep at Pontypool (for Pontrilas)
wake at Hereford (missing the ranging mountains,
the advancing mountains of Wales) and know for certain
you'd waked in the cider country of small wild hills
sliding steeply into the widespread valleys.

Threatening, storming and closing in, the hills
wake you next with a rough kiss on your cheek,
upstanding breasts, O mountainy hard and strong
covering the heart of England but drawn to Wales
as to a lover.
But in an easier mood
the hot white lanes of Shropshire run between small woods
looking to blue Clun highlands; ours were summer moods
heightened by the sudden lorry perched on the edge of the road
receiving belt upon belt from the Nissen store in the wood.
In the midst of life we are quickened by the light touch of death
death moving in small boxes, without panoply or weeping
into distant countries: not our death, not our hedgerow,
but someone else's death: and the bell is hardly tolling
above a village whisper, a Sunday-evening breath.

(Only by re-creation becomes the
morning dew like dew on the grass
in the morning of anticipation:
the name's repeated magic falters
with repetition: virtue is gone out of it,
the moving shadow is off the grass
and the young green wheat of expectation
is scorched earth on the sterile pass).

Yet what is strange is recognition
of the first light; and this remains
until the ultimate intuition.
At any sudden turn of the path
a name on the map strikes out of monotonous
words a still vision,
as in a frame, of the place we know

solidified out of reality, sharply
defined in perspective, then and now:
discovery as of volume — eternity
in depth where once ran Time like a railroad:
the shining rails slip round the corner
alone, if we can break the spell and stay
a moment where tomorrow is yesterday.

This is most true in the home country
where the blood distils the knowledge of things
into the nerves: the sensuous knowledge begins
by association at Euston, the pouring rain and the smoke,
smell of upholstery and varnish, chink of spoons on cups,
the "pocketapocket" of pistons, of wheels and pistons thrumming
an echo of secret thought: this is the road to the North,
to the ships and the yards and Ireland. Here is significance,
the salty taste of the North, taste of frost on the mouth;
salt rime on the walls and the bitter edge of the scree,
the water lolloping down over stones of great girth:
they are still there — their existence retains its validity,
even its memory on the lips; but the shock of delight is over,
we cannot save the excitement up till the last
bend in the rail; we shut the book, and cover
the pencilled verse from our own eyes and the past.

Now the deep memory of frost etches
in my mind the black and white of railway
and smoky platforms and the smell of laurel —
laurel and rhododendron, black to the hand,
and shaven grass, greener, velvet, unsooted,
the sweep of gravel and the broken glass house
and Japanese anemones and hot sun
on the paved path; and through the house a doorway
open upon green distance, upon air
and grass and leaves dancing.
The smells of childhood
steam up from the paths: hot raspberry afternoons,
rhododendrons in rain: the deep cutting,
the dragon of train roaring through it at midnight
a waking nightmare. Sooty trains and walls,
the noise of trams on setts, and currant bread
Mary Kinsella baked in time for tea.

Nothing alters: not the imagination
or any later knowledge spoils the picture —
security in essence: caught in a glass
the pulse beats still whose heart informed the reflection.
Green blades were rare and strange: but nothing of fear,
no grain of fear in all the hour's glass
of memory.
Now fear's in every sound
even fear of delight. The jealous gods
rule every omen.
As they did then, and we knew it.
Only the willing memory rubs out fear
and leaves the page innocent. NOW has fear
because of TO-MORROW. Yesterday is safe.

Happiness is a by-product: so perhaps is Ireland.
You come at it by devious routes, through five
war years of prohibition, ta-pocketing north
in sweltering trains nearer, nearer the bourne.
Illusion and memory painted a fine picture:
look at reality, now we're home again
past the great smoky basin of the Manchester Ship Canal
immensely below, glimpsed between iron trellis
and smoke and fog-striped sunlight like the faint Medway basin
enlarged and mechanized out of focus: Widnes.
Past (to-morrow morning) the gantries, the gulls and the Antrim
hills soft on the north of the loch, the cool
lifting veils of the rain on smokestack, on sheds, on Ireland:
past (to-day) the interminable passport queues,
past the docks and the gangways, at last in an air
like an O'Casey audience after a Twickenham victory,
thick with the smell of tweed and the easy voices
the easy manners: sugar in bowls on the tables,
waiters eager and plenty of cool tea. Past the hospital ship
cheering beside us, back from the Far East,
sick men cheering and sitting about on the quay
propped against walls or boxes, bandaged and cheering:
we going home and they coming home at last.
Let the past fade: to-morrow renews the past.

PREMIUM COMPETITION REPORT

(New Series : No. 11)

Selected by T. W. RAMSEY, F.R.S.L.

In the last letter I received from the late President, dated 23rd, March from Mount Vernon Hospital, he wrote: "I cannot write much as you will notice, but I would like to record that I found no difficulty until I had to pick the winner out of the seven Highly Commended. These were all so good that I found I had to divide the Premium among three . . ." — Editor.)

The Award

Madge Hales, Nottingham.
W. J. Sedergreen, Great Missenden.
Joan Forman, Chorley.

Highly Commended

Jean Kenward, Chorley Wood.
Mrs. P. M. Cleaver, Kensington.
Joan Beaumont, Sheffield.
Jenefer Carlyon, London, W.2.

Commended

S. J. Baggott, London, N.W.1.
Daphne Blampied, Harrow.
O. Culshaw, Blackburn.
Frank Dossetor, Bucks
Joyce Evelegh, Canterbury.
T. C. Hunsley, Hawkinge.
Erathia Mowle, London, N.W.3.
John Wheatley, Stratford-on-Avon.
Janet Teulon Woods, Kenya.
Anne M. Young, Washington, D.C.

PENELOPE WELCOMES ULYSSES

Heal all wounds these rockless moments
Let no question make reply,
Lay your head and lose disturbance
Where all violences die.

Give to me this moment muteness
Sanction not the meanest sound,
Witness of yourself in me
Still as flesh the sea has found.

Most love images are lusting
Travesty or trinket art,
What was twenty years unfaithful
Faithful was to my true heart.

MADGE HALES

THE HOMESTEAD UNDER A WANING MOON

Ghost of thy solitude,
  What does thou see
Dim in the waning light
  That wakens thee?
Silver to silver thine
  Enchantment weaves,
Shadows droop softly down
  From listening eaves.
Sleepers who frailly lie
  So still within
Breathe but the fading dreams
  That enter in.
Silence from star to star,
  Far-swept and fleet,
Stirs in the hush of Time
  About thy feet.

W. J. SEDERGREEN

WILD GEESE

There is a wheeling and a gathering in the skies,
And the sound of many voices — ringing high,
High into the crystal air — a silver bell of sound.
Round they wheel, and down, lovely and sinister —
Marshwards and seawards, calling the high call
Of winter and of wildness, sweeping with great wings
A pathway through the cirrus. All the thoughts
Of sordid day fall victims in that void
Which bells and swells behind them — which they leave,
To swim upon the beauty of their song
Down through the radiant air — towards the sea,
And the grey salt marshes, and the smouldering sunset.

JOAN FORMAN

CENTRES AND COMPETITIONS

THE BOSTON POETRY CENTRE

Meetings held monthly. Full details from: Miss Blanche T. Bigelow, 163 Eliot Street Milton 87, Mass.

THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. T. Weston Ramsey, 89 Poplar Avenue, Hove.

Fixtures every third Saturday in the month at the Glenside Hotel, 65 Grand Parade, Brighton. Readings at 3.15 until 5.30 p.m. Tudor Café attached. Refreshments if desired.

President: Rev. F. Pratt Green, 25 West Drive, Brighton 7.

THE BRONDESBURY POETRY CENTRE

Readings are held on the first Sunday of each month at 1 Mowbray Road, N.W.6, at 4 p.m. Any further information can be obtained from Miss Silvia Newton, L.R.A.M., at the above address — Telephone: WIL 6405.

There will be no Reading in August.

THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE CENTRE

13th September, 3.0 p.m.—

Verse in poetic forms such as sonnets, triolets and rondeaux. Mrs. L. W. Nicholls, Withurst, Lane End 302. Bus 37 to Garden School.

THE CHELSEA POETRY CIRCLE

(Affiliated to the Poetry Society. Formed 1946)

President:
Dame Sybil Thorndike

Vice-President:
Miss Margaret Rawlings

Details of Circle Readings can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 5 Redesdale Street, Chelsea, S.W.3.

THE CHICAGO CENTRE

Founders:
Josephine Hancock Logan.
Grace Patterson Lopez-Diaz.
V-Ps of The Poetry Society (London).

President:
Ruth Crary Clough,
St. Clair Hotel,
Chicago 11, Ill., U.S.A.

Founded in 1940, monthly luncheon meetings are held the year around at Lewis Towers, 820 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. Luncheon is followed by anonymous written criticism of poems submitted anonymously. Out of town members in California, Idaho, Washington, D.C., etc., participate in the monthly assignments and are mailed copies of the poem criticisms.

THE EALING POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: The Secretary, 3 Grafton Road, Acton, W.3.

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A study of one of the oldest of all forms of poetry — the narrative poem. Sir Maurice shows how despite great differences of origin and language, heroic poets tend to compose in much the same way wherever and whenever they work. He has collected material from thirty countries and makes use of texts not readily available in this country. 40s.

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THE FLORIDA POETRY CENTRES

(Formed 1920)
President General:
Marie Tello Phillips, 6427 Darlington Rd., Pittsburgh 17, Pa., U.S.A.

THE GUILDFORD POETRY CENTRE

Details of meetings may be obtained from The Centre Secretary, Mrs. F. E. Coker, 20 Litchfield Way, Guildford, Surrey.

THE HAMPSTEAD POETRY CENTRE (1909)

Meetings will be held on first and third Fridays, 8-9.30 p.m., at 14 Eldon Grove, by invitation of Miss E. Vaughan Jenkins.

18th July — Members' Own Choice.

THE IPSWICH CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to Miss Kay Turner, at 18 Willougby Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

THE KENSINGTON POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the founder, Mr. A. Vivian Burbury, 12 Bassett Road, London, W.10. Meetings are held monthly on a Tuesday evening. Shakespeare readings are also held monthly for those interested, by the allied but separate Kensington Branch of the British Empire Shakespeare Society.

THE LEEDS POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Peter Bailey, 49 Cross Flatts Parade, Beeston, Leeds 11.

THE MANCHESTER POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the Secretary: Mrs. B. Sterling, 25 June Street, Manchester 13. Meetings are held at Milton Hall, Deansgate, the third Wednesday in each month at 6.30 p.m.

THE MONROE (LOUISIANA) POETRY CENTRE

Mrs. James McCampbell Russell of 1304 Emerson Avenue, Monroe, Louisiana, is inaugurating a Centre of The Poetry Society and will be pleased to hear from anyone interested.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND POETRY CENTRE

The Northern Ireland Centre of the Poetry Society was extremely fortunate in having as guest reader its distinguished friend and founder member, Miss Marjorie Lyon of London, who took part in the Centre's last meeting of the session on Saturday, 19th April in the Kensington Hotel.

COMMENDED BOOKS OF POETRY

Dart, Loveliest of Rivers.	A. Nicholson Tucker	5s. 0d.
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Why Man was made, and other Poems.	H. W. Rose-Ricketts	2s. 0d.
Sea Spray and Meadow Mist.	V. C. Hindle	2s. 0d.
The Bachelor Club.	Clive Holmes	2s. 0d.
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Poems Light and Gay.	Marjorie Kilner	1s. 6d.
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Tomorrow.	W. Brand	1s. 0d.
The Little Yellow Crocus.	Kay Kinmel	1s. 0d.
We Three, and other Poems.	Dorothy E. Boocock	1s. 0d.
My Wedding Day.	M. Palphramand	1s. 0d.
Joy, and other Poems.	R. Greaves	1s. 0d.
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The Examinations Syllabus covers all grades from Preliminary to Advanced Senior, also the Diplomas of Associate, Licentiate and Fellow.

The College also provides complete Courses in all Musical Subjects.

Scholarships and Local Exhibitions are offered annually.

Medals and Book Prizes are awarded in the certificate grades at each examination period.

Teaching Prospectus and Syllabus of the Examinations may be had from THE SECRETARY.

In John Masefield's verse play *End and Beginning*, the story of the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, her interpretation of the character of the tragic Queen was memorable for its delicacy of expression and emotional appeal.

Miss Lyon brought into vivid relief the varied facets of this complex personality, with moods of despair, pride, dignity, courage, and a deep religious humility which made this a most poignant and moving performance.

The cast included Gloria Gordon, Elizabeth Dickey and Shirley James, members of the N.I. Centre, and George Loxton and Barry Lloyd of the Shakespeare Society, who very ably supported Miss Lyon in an outstanding production.

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss H. Haddock, 18 Ashley Gardens, Belfast.

THE NOTTINGHAM POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Lake Aske, Esq., 281 Wilford Lane, Nottingham.

THE NOVA SCOTIA POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to Mrs. Borden Haverstock, 12 Ogilvie Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Secretary's Report for 1951 —

We are pleased to report a very interesting year. Many members had original poems and articles published in newspapers. We had nine general and six executive meetings.

We were pleased to have the President of Dalhousie University, Dr. A. E. Kerr take such an interest in our Society and happy to have him accept the office of Honorary President. At our Twelfth Annual Dinner Meeting, the Chief Justice of Nova Scotia, Hon. J. L. Ilsley was welcomed as a Patron. Later in the year Professors Bennett, Lambertson and Bevan became Honorary Associate Members.

Our members were most generous in opening their homes for meetings each month. During the year it was our privilege to hear Dr. J. B. Hardie speak on Robert Burns and his works. Dr. Burns Martin gave us an enlightening talk on the Romantic Movement in poetry, ballads in general and the "Ancient Mariner" in particular. Following an address by Dr. A. E. Kerr, Sister Maura gave a short talk on *Eileen Duggan,* the Voice of New Zealand, and Dr. V. B. Rhodenizer chose as his subject *Laurence Dakin,* our Nova Scotian-born poet.

At the present time Dr. Burns Martin is giving our Society constructive talks on *Contemporary Modern Poetry*. Dr. Martin will continue these talks throughout the winter, covering Vol. 7 *Anthology of Modern Poetry*.

Sponsoring a poetry contest and publication of *The Nova Scotia Book of Verse: Vol. II* was our most important undertaking of the year. The book was warmly received.

THE REIGATE POETRY CENTRE

Details of Meetings may be obtained from the Centre Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Hicks, The Alton, Alma Road, Reigate, where meetings are held.

THE ST. PETERSBURG (U.S.A.) CENTRE
(Formed 1946)

Members and potential members are invited to communicate with the President, Helen T. Douglas Robinson, 815 Jackson Street North, St. Petersburg 6, Florida. The Centre seeks to promote production of the best in poetry.

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1.	T. W. Ramsey	Friendly Tree
2.	T. W. Ramsey	Far over Wires
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4.	Thomas Moult	Prayer in Time of Peace or War
5.	V. Sackville-West	Timgad (*in French*)
6.	Joyce Grenfell	Sonnet
7.	Joyce Grenfell	A morning William Morris might have known
8.	Stephen Graham	A Face
9.	William Kean Seymour	Store of Trees
10.	William Kean Seymour	So Sceptical my Heart
11.	Arthur Vivian	Horatian Night Piece
12.	Arthur Vivian	Hope, Death and Immortality
13.	Terence Heywood	Winter Jasmine
14.	Geoffrey Johnson	Mystery
15.	Doris Major	Spring Carol

The Gen. Sec., The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, W.1.

LONDON SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

Many people find themselves, in these momentous days, able to express their feelings in poetry or drama, but are doubtful about the results, and would like helpful advice (and perhaps some "vetting") before submitting their work to publishers. The LONDON SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM has been so successful in work of this kind that it now employs upon its staff the services of experienced authors who regularly undertake this work at a moderate charge.

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SHEFFIELD POETRY CLUB

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss F. G. Stimpson, 23 Silver Hill Road, Sheffield 11. Meetings: Grand Hotel, monthly.

THE SOUTHAMPTON POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss Joy Brider, 9 Archers Road, Southampton.

THE STROUD CENTRE

For particulars of Membership, please apply to the Hon. Secretary of the Stroud Poetry Centre, Miss Mary Martyn, Sunfold, Rodborough Common, near Stroud.

THE TORONTO CENTRE

All enquiries should be made to Mr. Thos. G. Ballantyne of Apartment 2, 101 Bernard Avenue, Toronto. Telephone: M.I. 2976.

THE WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE POETRY CENTRE

President: Wilfrid Gibson, Esq.

Enquiries should be sent to: Mrs. Elsie M. Gittens, 28 Oatlands Drive, Weybridge, Surrey.

A meeting was well attended to hear a Reading from Wilfrid Gibson's *Collected Poems,* led by John Gittens, B.A., on Thursday, 20th March.

Will anyone able and willing to start a Centre in any part of the country please communicate with the Secretary, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

ORIOLE: POETS' GROUP OF THE POETRY SOCIETY

Dedicated to furthering the work of active poets within the Society the Oriole Group, meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month, "to hear each other's work and discuss the spirit and substance of poetry". All interested are invited to communicate with me at The Well House, Ewell, Surrey — LEIGH HENRY.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S CRITICAL SERVICE

The Poetry Society has pleasure in announcing the continuance of its Critical Service for Members. Two poems only may be submitted for criticism, for a minimum fee of 5s.

The charge for the criticism of each additional poem (under 100 lines) is 2s. It is particularly requested that all poems submitted should be typed and that a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S AUDITIONS AND EXAMINATIONS

The Poetry Society has conducted auditions and examinations in the art of verse-speaking for many years, and its success in this valuable cultural activity is attested by the fact that the number of schools and institutions in all parts of England which the Society examines, continually increases.

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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

To the General Secretary,
General Offices of The Poetry Society (Incorporated),
33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

I desire to be enrolled as a member; entrance fee and first annual subscription (22/6d.) enclosed herewith.

(The Annual Subscription becomes due and renewable on the completion of one year from the date of joining. Cheques, etc., should be made payable to The Poetry Society.)

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Date .....

Junior preliminary examnations are available for the youngest children and these continue through various grades, up to the final test for adult students, for which the Society's gold medal is the final award for success.

General regulations governing these auditions may be obtained on application to The Registrar, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, with whom arrangements can be made for auditions for schools, colleges, or private individuals.

THE GREENWOOD COMPETITIONS FOR 1952

The Poetry Society is empowered by the executors of the late Mrs. Julia Wickham Greenwood to offer the sum of £20 as the Shirley Carter Greenwood Prize for the best single poem in open competition.

Entries should be addressed "The Greenwood Prize", 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Only one poem may be submitted by any one competitor, the length not to exceed 250 lines; no previously published poem may be entered. The full name and address of the author must be given and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed if return of the poem is desired. If a nom-de-plume is adopted, name and address of sender must be given in a closed envelope bearing the pseudonym. The winning poem will be printed in *The Poetry Review* and may be reprinted at the discretion of the Editor, who may also reserve near winners for publication in *The Poetry Review*.

Closing date is 31st December, 1952.

THE PREMIUM COMPETITION

The above competition continues as before with the total entrance fees as prize money which may be won outright by a single competitor or may be divided at the discretion of the Premium Adjudicator. An entrance fee of 2s. 6d. will be charged, and a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed if a receipt is desired. Competitors must observe the following rules:

1. One poem only may be entered by each competitor.
2. The poem must be typed and no stamped addressed envelope will be required unless a receipt is desired. (See Rule 3.)
3. Competitors must retain copies of their poems, as none can be returned.
4. Entries must be addressed "Premium Competition", *The Poetry Review*, 33 Portman Square, W.1.
5. Each poem must bear the author's name and address.
6. Entrants must be members of the Poetry Society or regular subscribers to *The Poetry Review*.
7. The winner of a full Premium or one who has shared the prize twice will not be eligible for re-entry for twelve months.
8. No previously published poem may be entered.

The closing date for the next Premium Competition will be 1st August, 1952.

THE HOWARD PARSONS EPIGRAM COMPETITION: 1953

The Poetry Society is empowered by Mr. Howard Parsons, a long-standing member of the Society, to offer the following prizes, endowed by him for an Epigram Competition.

1st prize, 5 guineas; 2nd prize, 2 guineas; 3rd prize, 1 guinea. Entries which should not have been previously published should be marked "Epigram" and should not bear a stamped addressed envelope as MSS. cannot be returned. They should be addressed to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, to reach here not later than 1st March, 1953. The Society reserves the right to extend the closing date of the competition should none of the entries reach the required standard.

THE POETRY SOCIETY : JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP

Every boy and girl under eighteen years of age is now entitled to become a Junior Member of the Poetry Society.

Every junior member will enjoy the privileges of an ordinary member, but, instead of *The Poetry Review*, will receive each quarter, post free, a special magazine called *The Voice of Youth.*

The Voice of Youth is the only magazine in the country addressed solely to all under eighteen, and devoted wholly to poetry. There are special articles about the way poets write, the thrill of finding their meaning, how poetry grew from ballad songs, the ways in which poets of to-day are seeking to find new ways to express themselves, the adventure of selecting and manipulating words to create a poem, the way to use the human voice to convey the true inner meaning of poetry, and so on.

There are competitions in every issue, the opportunity of getting one's special efforts criticized by experts. A part is always devoted to printing the best that is written by the junior members themselves.

Books and gramophone records will be reviewed. Queries will be answered and an open correspondence column will be there for the readers to give their own views.

The Poetry Society is the largest fellowship of poetry lovers in the world and, for over forty years, has played a great part in maintaining the strength and purity of this our English heritage.

YOU, if under 18, have the opportunity of joining as a Junior Member.

You can do so quite easily by completing the form below.

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Name in Block Letters.

of.....

apply for membership of the Poetry Society as a Junior Member, and enclose 5s. being subscription for one year.

ANNUAL POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR THOSE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP 6s. 6d.

Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

THE LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS SONNET COMPETITION FOR 1953

The Poetry Society has the pleasure of announcing the fourth Annual Competition in memory of Lord Alfred Douglas for a sonnet upon any subject. One of the two forms adopted by Lord Alfred Douglas in his sonnets, must be used; these are:

For the Octave — 1, 2, 2, 1; 1, 2, 2, 1.

For the Sextet — 3, 4, 5; 3, 4, 5 *or* 3, 4; 3, 4; 3, 4.

The prize of £10 may be divided at the discretion of the adjudicator; the winning poem or poems will be published with the award in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors must retain copies of their poems as these cannot be returned. The sonnets should bear a definite title and not merely marked "Sonnet". Not more than two sonnets may be submitted by each competitor by 30th June, 1953. Address "Sonnet Competition", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear names and addresses of competitors. No previously published poem may be entered.

ORIOLE POETRY PRIZE

ORIOLE (The Poets Group of the Poetry Society) offer an annual prize of £5 for a poem on a given subject to be announced each March. The subject for 1952 is "Power". Entries must not exceed thirty-two lines. Competitors are required to adopt a pseudonym. This should be written in block capitals on the manuscript and also on a sealed envelope containing the entrant's name and address which must accompany every entry. No Competitor may enter more than one poem.

The winning poem will appear in *Poetry Review*. Do not enclose stamps as manuscripts are not returnable. Closing date 31st July, 1952. Address to: ORIOLE PRIZE, 33 Portman Square, W.1.

THE POETRY SOCIETY JUNIOR VERSE COMPETITION

The Poetry Society have pleasure in announcing the next annual Junior Verse Competition. Schools throughout the country are invited to co-operate in submitting the work of their pupils.

The Competition will be divided into two classes:

(*a*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, age up to thirteen years last birthday. There will be a book prize inscribed by the Poetry Society.

(*b*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, aged from fourteen to seventeen years last birthday. There will be a book prize, inscribed by the Poetry Society and four additional prizes of one year's Membership to the Poetry Society.

The poem may be on any subject. Closing date, 30th June, 1952. Entries to be addressed to: The Junior Verse Competition, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear the names and addresses of competitors and copies should be retained as these cannot be returned.

POEMS OF PLACE COMPETITION FOR 1952

Mrs. A. Dorothy Holmes, a Shropshire member of The Poetry Society, offers £10 annually in competition for poems of place. Competitors who must be members of The Poetry Society, may submit not more than two poems, previously unpublished, of not more than 100 lines. All entries should be typewritten and bear the name and address of the author; poems should be addressed to "The Holmes Prize", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, not later than 1st December, 1952. The judges may divide the prize money at their discretion, and the winning poem or poems may be published in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors are asked to keep copies of their entries as these cannot be returned.

"Where there is no vision the people perish"

THE POETRY REVIEW

33 PORTMAN SQUARE, LONDON, W.1.

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NEXT ISSUE—

Poetry and Prose by

EDMUND BLUNDEN, LOUIS GOLDING, A. E. COPPARD, etc. and a Special Review of **T. W. Ramsey's** *Il Paradiso.* Meanwhile a reading in Italian and English from this Book has been arranged for the **Poetry Hour, Friday, October 24,** at **33 Portman Square.**

These pages—An offering to

WALTER DE LA MARE

"What lovely things
Thy hand hath made"

Prelude . . .

ACCENT ON BEAUTY

It is now forty-three years since The Poetry Society was established, and with it *The Poetry Review*. During that time two world-wars have been fought, and poetry, like the other arts, has suffered great tribulation. Inevitably *The Poetry Review* has been affected by these critical times, but the devotion and enthusiasm of the friends of poetry have been so great and memorable that the formation of this Editorial Board, now at work for the first time, must be regarded as signifying a triumph of survival which has hardly been paralleled in the whole history of poetry periodicals.

It is a paradox, but true, that adversity often presents us with the finest opportunities. If standards in morals and art are everywhere being cheapened, and if as a result of social chaos the things of the mind and spirit are ruthlessly assaulted, then it should be, and is, not only our privilege but our pride to keep faith in the ideals the great poets have bequeathed to us. The periodicals that care for poetry have fallen in recent years as thick as the leaves in Milton's "Vallombrosa," until only a few are left perilously clinging to the bough. Let us face gallantly these bleak facts; let us think as Thomas Hardy thought when he wrote that "if a way to a better there be it exacts a look at the worst". But let us also be gay with the hopefulness of renewed enterprise, welcoming with equal warmth the help and the manuscripts of both those who are members of the Society and those who are as yet outside it. And if proof should be needed of our enthusiasm, we beg to state at once that all contributions accepted will be paid for, and however harsh some critics of the *Review's* policy may have been in the past, they are forthwith handsomely forgiven. Indeed they are just as welcome as anyone else, member or non-member, young or old, to submit their work. We are well aware, moreover, that the impressiveness of a poem is for many largely determined by the name of the celebrity signing it.

Our policy will be to publish work signed by big name or little, provided it has the requisite qualities.

Much damage has been and is still being done to Poetry by the antagonism of Left against Right and of Right against Left. We believe that a young poet is wise to absorb as much as he can of the old poets before making experiments for himself; that is, it is folly to kick off from nothing into nowhere and hope for the best! In fact, the most cursory study of past English or any other poetry will show that the amount of genuine gold added to the already undisputed treasure is very little even in a generation. But that is no reason why experiments should not be made, and we welcome any attempt to extend the frontiers of poetry provided it is genuine, just as we smile at it if it is merely bogus. In short, we want good well-wrought verse of any kind — that which is in line with the main English tradition and that which deviates to discover authentically new paths. What we do not want is the derivative, the pastiche, the verse whose diction is worn so smooth that it has neither grip nor bite; equally unwanted is the sprawling, the amorphous, the anarchic, that poses as the profound. Let the verse be truly felt and really written, and it has artistic integrity in the most self-exacting sense. A critic of renown, D. S. MacColl, wrote these words in his biography of the artist, Wilson Steer: "Painting itself, eviscerated and evacuated as it has been by theoretic gangsters, is an ancient fashion that may lapse, like others before it, but, if anywhere a civilized order revive, that art will, like morning, be reborn." What is true of painting is equally true of poetry.

The Editorial Board consists of the following, all elected, and all members of The Poetry Society:—

Stephen Graham, author and traveller;
Geoffrey Johnson, poet and editor;
Miss Bangay, critic;
John Graddon, editor of *The Voice of Youth*;
Tony Van den Bergh, editor and script-writer;
Kennedy Williamson, author and publisher;
John Bayliss, poet;

and myself as Chairman. Our labours, which are entirely voluntary, will be greatly lightened if would-be contributors observe a few elementary rules when submitting their MSS:

1. All MSS must have the name and the address of the author stated in the top left hand corner of the first page. If he is a member of the Society a bracketed M should be added.
2. One side only of the paper must be used.
3. Reasonable margins and top space should be left.
4. A stamped and self-addressed foolscap envelope must always be enclosed. Otherwise, no MSS will be considered. Loose stamps cannot

be regarded as a substitute. Except in rare instances an introductory letter is not necessary.

5. In their own interest writers should notice that poems over thirty lines in length have a very doubtful chance of acceptance.

6. If helpful editorial suggestions are made with a returned MS, please do not reply challenging the advice. Requests for criticism, moreover, are not invited. It should be remembered that the Poetry Society already has a well-organized service for expert advice, as announced in each issue.

7. Not more than four poems should be submitted at one time. Two is an ideal number.

8. The Editorial Board does not accept responsibility for the safe custody and return of any unsolicited MSS, and will not be liable for the loss in transit or otherwise.

9. Acceptance or rejection of a MS cannot reasonably be expected until at least a month has elapsed.

10. The receipt of a proof does not necessarily imply immediate publication.

So much for the contributor. Now for the reader. Is it too much to ask each reader who is a member, when thinking about Christmas and a friend, to substitute for the usual gift the payment of a year's subscription to the Poetry Society? To say the least, this would be a far more lasting token of friendship than the often unwanted book or dubious cigars. Besides, if every member responded to this request, think of what our circulation would become!

It is with the utmost confidence that we of the Editorial Board intend to maintain the high position of *The Poetry Review* in English letters. To quote an eminent critic again:

"The battles of Beauty are never finally won; in each generation they must be fought afresh. It depends on a few voices in each of them whether Titian counts as a master. Let us not be missing among 'Knights of the Holy Spirit.'"

THOMAS MOULT,
President of the Poetry Society and Chairman of the Editorial Board.

ST. ANDREWS

(September the Seventeenth 1925)

WALTER DE LA MARE

Fickle of choice is Memory:
But hidden in her secret deeps
She guards whatever in life may be
Vivid and sweet perpetually;
And of the loved strict treasury keeps.

There childhood's flowers bloom for aye;
There, in a quiet grave, profound,
Those whom dark death hath lured away
Live on, with peace unchanging crowned,
Immune from time's decay.

Keeps she for me, then, safe-enshrined,
Cold of the North, those bleached grey streets;
Grey skies, a glinting sun, a wind
From climes where sea with ocean meets,
And ruinous walls by tempests pined.

There history in romance doth hide:
Martyr and saint, Pict, Scot, Culdees.
They dared, fought, suffered, dreamed and died,
Yet of their long wild centuries
Left but these stones their bones beside.

Ghosts in that sunlight come and go:
Columba, David, Margaret,
Bothwell, the fierce, dark Rizzio,
And she, caught fast in fate's fell net,
Mary, the twice-queened, fair as snow . . .

The winter daylight wanes. The tide
Lays a cold wreath of foam upon
Its sea-worn rocks. The billows ride
In endless cavalcade — are gone,
The rose of eve burns far and wide.

FIRST LOVE

JOHN BAYLISS

Now age has traced thin shadows on her face
Like an indifferent artist, and I see
Only the outline cold and colourless
Where once I saw the eagerness of beauty.

And yet how rarely would those eyes I loved
Ever regard me. She seemed made of stone
And ever looked beyond me. Still unmoved
She stares, but she is older and alone.

SONG TO A MELODY HEARD AT THE PLAYERS' THEATRE

JOHN BAYLISS

When I was young I was full of dreaming fancies
And followed my love to the Country of the Air,
But as soon as the sun came, I found that I had lost her,
And no daylight lady could ever seem as fair.

How shall I find her for whom I have been waiting,
Late as it is, in this wilderness of days?
How shall I tell her, when I am tired of living,
That I am too old now for all her golden ways?

Lightly I loved her, and lightly I left her,
Now all I ask is the sight of her soft hair.
Always remember that Love is a swift visitor
And shut is the heart when she is no longer there.

IRISH MARKET DAY

CELIA RANDALL

I was silent, having nothing to say,
They were talking, discussing the day at the fair,
The price of the cattle, the cost of the fodder,
The oats beyond buying, poor quality hay.
They were naming the horses — Flying Judy, and Shawn;
I was silent for all I'd seen in the market
Was a half-wild girl like a mountain rowan,
A girl in the tinker's crowd with the eyes of a fawn.

BALLAD OF GHOSTS AND HEROES

MAURICE CARPENTER

Who are the heroes of the aluminium age?
  And who the ghosts of the age of chromium,
That clothe themselves in the flesh of dream, to rage
  Down the cold corridors of our millenium?

The golden flesh is shrivelled on the tree,
  The skeleton within the open tomb
Crumbles to nothing that the eye can see;
  Where are the ghosts of the age of chromium?

Within the empty tomb the vestments lie,
  While like a ragged jacket lies his rage;
His life goes junketing across the sky;
  Is he the hero of the aluminium age?

This glossy metal plating shops and bars
  Twists up the grins of heroes into lies,
This feathery metal spun to pots and spars
  Seduces ghosts through blue translucent skies.

Golden ornaments and weapons load
  Those bones that lie, a litter, in our cage;
The heart's dark cage whose bars are our foreboding;
  Are these the ghosts that grip our chromium age?

Gone are the barges down the dark sea roads,
  Three weeping queens all longing shall assuage,
But who remains alive to lift our loads?
  What hero of the aluminium age?

Sage, Secretary, Saviour, Saint, Shop Steward!
  Our panics ride the round mausoleum
Of our skulls. We take a bitter wage
  Who turn the engine for no true reward.
As we fall from our skyborne hearse of aluminium
  Succour us in our rustless chromium age.

Not these, the scapegoats, but our own true eye
  That sees the real, to judge it with the gauge
Of our good fellowship, and question why
Men die thus for a rustless chromium age,
  And answer, powerful with our own millenium,
We are ourselves the heroes of the age of aluminium.

OLD TOWNS

HERBERT BLUEN

Old towns I know, with cobbled streets like dim
Canals that greyly gleam as though with blurred
Memories that time has mellowed to a ditty.

Cathedral windows jewelled with seraphim,
And pillared sanctuaries where prayers unheard
By men are whispered to the Christ for pity.

Old towns like mild Madonnas, slumber-lured,
Haloed at sunset, sculptured by the years,
Still as the dead in their dark peace untold.

And Venetian bridges, where once song-immured,
Grave poets mused, while singing gondoliers
Were watery enchantments edged with gold.

Rome, Athens, Bruges, and ancient Tokyo . . .
Give me old towns that tell of long ago.

IN MEMORIAM
T. W. RAMSEY
(President of the Poetry Society)

E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

You were not of our loose and modern mould,
  The lore of ages surged high in your blood,
The antique world you fairly understood
  And trusty horoscopes could well unfold.
But most your enterprising mind was bold
  To dwell where Dante's noble presence stood;
While others just were clever you were good,
  And so your soothsay was securely told.

Of charity to poets less than you
  I would not here expatiate or scream,
Suffice it that the Muses' grove you knew
  Happy within the confines of your theme.
While WAVELL stands a type for fighters true
  You shall not sure be cheated of your dream.

EDITORIAL NOTE—Field-Marshal Lord Wavell was an earlier President of the Poetry Society

THE SHEPHERD
(From Francis Jammes)

MARJORIE BALDWIN

With your blue umbrella and your greasy sheep,
And your clothes that smell of cheese,
You are going up the hillside to the sky,
Leaning on your stick of holly, oak, or medlar.
You are following the wiry-haired dog and the donkey
Who carries leaden-hued cans on his ridge-like back.
You will pass by the blacksmiths in the villages,
Then you will reach the fragrant mountain,
Where your flock will feed like little white bushes.
There the peaks are hidden by clouds that move slowly,
There vultures fly with neck unfeathered,
And red fires come up in the night mists.
There you will contemplate in peace
The spirit of God brooding over this immensity.

THE FALL OF THE MUSES

By LORD DUNSANY

I have been reading lately a good many lines of modern verse, because I have found myself criticizing it in conversation to people who obviously like it, and it seemed to me unfair to do so any more without reading about as much of it as they have done. I have read some books of it published in England, and many quotations from it in *New Lamps for Old*, by Stanton Coblentz, who gives very thorough examples of its sister muse in America. And I am most astonished that in both countries it has found the readers and admirers that it undoubtedly has. I am as astonished as that child must have been, of whom Hans Andersen tells, who saw the King with train-bearers marching in procession and noticed, as nobody else had done, that he was perfectly naked. And, like that child, I am blurting out what I see.

But it is not enough to say that it is unmelodious nonsense; what I want to try to discover is how on earth this land that knew Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley, and Keats, and has never been without a poet between Spenser and de la Mare, and the United States of America that had, amongst others, Edgar Allen Poe, and has Stanton Coblentz to-day, should have accepted these things and rewarded the men who wrote them. These lines are nearly always utterly without metre or even rhythm, and when they do stray for a while into metre or rhyme they soon abandon it, the rhymes getting fewer and fewer, as if the writer were wearying of the trouble of finding any more. The thought itself is often trite, as this:

They all die, die, die,
The tram-conductors, the cops, and the players of baseball,
The keepers of confectioners' shops and the owners of motors,
The presidents of railways and building contractors,
They all die.

But if it all went like this, they might be found out; so they write passages which you, my reader, will not be able to understand, such as this:

The moon is not the moon
Nor the sea the sea.
And yet the sea draws the moon as much as the moon draws the sea
And drowns the moon in unplumbable ages of filth
For ever and ever and ever.

But is the reason that you cannot understand it that the thought is too deep for you? Or is it because there is no thought there at all? Thought can be plumbed. The best thought is not clear at once; but all thought can be plumbed. Only nonsense can never be plumbed. For there is, as it were, no bottom to it.

It is not my opinion that I am trying to thrust on my readers, but I am hoping to strengthen their own opinion; so that instead of fearing they may have missed something in that line:

The moon is not the moon —

and that they are not quite clever enough to appreciate "unplumbable ages of filth," they may back their own opinion and say straight out that it is nonsense. After all, there is nothing else to go by, and none that is afraid to trust his own opinion will ever be able to judge anything. It is not that anyone's opinion can be infallible, but that it is better to miss many thoughts in Chaucer because one cannot always quite understand the old language than to admit that there may perhaps be something true, or even profound, in "the moon is not the moon". For how can one ever appreciate anything beautiful, if one has given one's appreciation already to nonsense? And then, when the meaning is clear, as it so seldom is, does modern verse give us the truth? Take these lines for instance:

Mr. and Mrs. Hallowe
Spend all their time drinking tallow.

I have asked many men and women if they ever drink tallow, and they all say no.

I do not know what ingredients there are in poetry besides truth and beauty. Those lines about Mr. and Mrs. Hallowe are not true, and I have seen several clear statements in modern verse which are of the same nature, though most modern verse is so vague that it is hard to say whether it is true or not, even when it is not pure nonsense. Besides the ingredients of a dish there is cooking, and bad cooking may spoil the best ingredient. It is the same with truth and the presentation of it: if that presentation is vague and ambiguous, the truth with which the writer wished to delight or interest readers cannot delight them, for the labour of finding it out will leave them too weary for any delight, if even their interest survives. As for beauty, the modernists seem to have turned from it in contempt, as though it were something in which all past ages delighted only because they did not know any better. Is there any metre at all in most modern verse? And if so what is that metre? There is beautiful rhythm in good prose, but does even this appear in those lines that are written nowadays beginning with capital letters; and is there any metre or rhythm in it whereby it could be distinguished from any column of clues to a crossword?

But I set out not to criticize any modern verse, but to attempt to account for its acceptance; and to do this is very difficult. Yet may it not be that by casting away metre and using the very commonest words, and often even obscene ones, the writers of these things have tempted a large public to believe that poetry is not after all beyond any of them, and that like Monsieur Jourdain in Molière's "Bourgeois Gentilhomme", who discovered that he talked prose, they talk poetry every day. Not that common

speech cannot be good material for poetry. Kipling was not the first to teach us that, for Dante knew it before him. And I remember discovering over half a century ago that we had a new poet, when I read in a magazine:

> He lolled on a bollard, a sunburned son of the sea,
> "'N many a queer hash-up have I seen," said he —

which were the first lines I remember reading by the present poet laureate. But common speech must be treated clearly and melodiously if it is to be made into poetry, and modern versifiers do neither.

After all, there have not been more than three or four poets in any generation, so that among fifty million very few could hope to be poets; and may it not be that trite thought, with its triteness concealed by vagueness, and without metre or rhyme, may be welcomed because it gives to words that are not beyond the efforts of anybody the dignity of print, and of lines beginning with capital letters that have the appearance of poetry. And perhaps it does not get found out at once, as it is bound to be soon, because the minds of this generation may be slightly confused with the vast quantity of news that they get several times every day and which must be more than they are able to assimilate. For surely a historian could write at least one volume of the history of our times from material provided by all the newspapers and everything broadcast on a single one of our days. Have we leisure in the evening, when we have understood and co-ordinated all this, if indeed we have yet done so, to make out whether there is any sense or not in such lines as:

> There is no time.
> For time past is gone
> And time future is not yet here
> And the present is only momentary,
> Not worth our serious consideration.
> And so I say to you that there is no time.
> And I shall say it again. There is no time at all.

Obviously there is no metre here. And yet is it quite obvious? For all the lines begin with capital letters, as in poetry, and are not very much shorter or longer than lines written by Milton, and metre is a very intricate thing, so that one cannot be quite sure; and, as for sense, it is not there at first sight; but who is the average man to say that it could not be found, had he the time and the learning to look for it? And then there is about it a certain pompous air that makes it look as if the writer might have something to say, just as there are very smartly dressed men who have the air of knowing something about the result of a race before it is run, or at any rate have the power to persuade several young men that they do. And so this generation seems to have accepted this new thing, rather than run the risk, that I am running now, of being thought to be too half-witted to see the profound thoughts in those lines about time. Test them by the metre of

Milton, and the answer comes at once. "Oh, Milton is outdated." And, if Milton is outdated, how much more so must Homer be, whose hexameters, handed on to Virgil, Tennyson held to be "the lordliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man." But Tennyson must seem ridiculous to all to whom the lines I have just quoted do not appear so.

It is sometimes said that our age is chaotic, and so can only be told of in lines that are as confused. But surely nothing was more chaotic than the year 1940, and Mr. Churchill's speeches told of it in good clear prose that was far more rhythmic than any verse of the modernists' school.

I once asked a lady who liked certain modern verse why she did so. And she said that it stimulated thoughts. But such lines as:

Blah, blah, blah. Bang —

might inspire thoughts of a military band marching by, and then the splendour of war. Yet the line should not be called verse.

I suppose it is the revolution, the revolution against the Muses. Sooner or later in many lands, what is common rises up against what is high; and now these common untidy thoughts have come with their noisy lines into the temples of the Muses to drive them out and desecrate their altars, as the mob came into the court of Louis XVI. Perhaps it is felt that they have reigned long enough. And now they go.

I should mention that all the lines of modern poetry that I have quoted were written by myself. But they are no worse than other modern lines I have read, and it is better to use mine than to hurt the feelings and break the copyright of men and women who have written similar things. I hope therefore that I shall not be challenged to give examples.

We all like to be remembered. Marble and brass make good memorials, but poetry seems to outlast them. If the sort of lines I have quoted should chance to survive beyond our day, what will another age think of us? Will they think Homer outdated and our modern writers immortal? And, if they do, what sort of people will they think that we were? Will they believe that we endured the blitz and won the greatest war that the world has known? Or will they think that the victory of such people as us was a myth, like the story of Jack the Giant-killer. Once I had the honour of meeting Lady Butler, who painted contemporary pictures of the Crimean War and of the First World War. I remember her plaintively saying to me, "People deride the Victorians now. What *will* they say of *this* age?"

HERITAGE

W. H. BOORE

We are a sea-borne race; the best
- That in us lies is of the sea;
And all the virtues of my sires
  My children render back to me.

I saw my son in urgent humour
  Leaning forward to his sport
Run like the stem of some fine vessel
  Cleaving to a distant port.

My daughter sat suffused in thought,
  Resting chin on finger's tip;
In beauty like a mast-head light
  Proud riding on its anchored ship.

And she, my youngest yet, was swift
  And eager as a twilit crest
Which stretches at the crumbling earth
  And dances to the crumbling west.

PRIMAVERA EXPRESS

TERESA HOOLEY

Spring,
The côte-d'azur, golden-arrow, Lord-of-the-Isles train,
Runs through orchard and field,
Leaving a white smoke-blossom trail
Of plum, pear, damson, cherry.
Stops at green halts,
Drops consignments of buds, leaves, flowers.
Rocks, sways, hums bee-loud, throbs.
Picks up water
Dry-drains snow-troughs, flood-ditches, fen-furrows.
Whistles,
Blackbird, throstle-shrill,
And plunges
Into the tree-roofed, emerald-sultry, lightning-flare-lit
Tunnel of Summer.

THE YOUNG FOX

ARTHUR H. JENKINS

He slips at glimmering dawn,
Red as ripe-seeded docks,
From hen roosts on grey hills,
To snug earth under rocks;

Hears wild wind's weeping horn
And freezes as he treads,
Sees red sun leap far woods;
Fears fang his heart to shreds . . .

He snuffs no scent of death,
Low-crouched, he knows at last
His riven heart is healed;
His fears stream baying past.

OTTER BITCH

ARTHUR H. JENKINS

Lithe, sinuous downstream she weaves
Towards the river's reeded loop,
Silent as cloud across the moon,
She slips where pollard willows stoop.

Upon the river's pebbled bed
She sights a lurking, hook-scarred pike
And dives, laced bubbles wobble up
From fangs unsheathed like dirks to strike.

He half rolls, whipping into weeds,
The dark depths seethe like cauldron broth,
Her teeth grind bone beneath the fin,
The river boils with bloody froth.

Dripping, she drops him in the grass,
Watches the feeble, flapping gill,
Till all his gasping glittering length
Like rippled water, shudders still.

BUS QUEUE

D. R. LOCK

Looking down the long line
Of waiting faces
(Eager; unconcerned; apathetic)
I am (as usual) lost in amazement
That old Mother Nature can coin
These many, all so different,
Casts of countenance;
Can etch this endless
Diversity of feature,
And yet never once duplicate
Her original.

Did Noah, I wonder,
Toy with the like idea,
As he watched with assessing eye,
His chosen entrants
Queue for the Ark?

THE DANUBE IN VIENNA

GEORGE MOOR

It flows steel-grey with no wild gloom and gleam,
  Not like Swiss rivers rushing green as grass,
  Nor like the Mersey where remote worlds mass
And make the sooty docks with splendour teem.
  This is a sober unobtrusive stream
    Quakerly clad, that seems content to glass
    The banks within its quiet face and pass.
And yet how glorious in human dream!

Where art is rich, be Nature what it will!
  More fame and splendour on these waters fall
    Than on those rivers glorying in their size.
Here art has surged and surges, bringing still
  Deeper associations to the eyes:
    For Man creates more worth than Nature's all.

THE SWAN

ALICE REDDIHOUGH

I crossed the road
To see the lights reflected
In the pond at Hampstead.

In the still, black water,
Quite unexpected,
A sleeping swan floated.

The long neck lowered
Curved smoothly round
Till the white wings buried
The shapely head.

O trusting swan
That sleeps within
A yard of man,
Sleep safe till dawn.

Would that we all
Were swans, and less resemble
The wakeful owl.

NORTHERN EASTER

ALICE REDDIHOUGH

Yellow, black
And silver mingle
With the living
Green of Easter.

Yellow dust
On silver willow
Gleams against
The blackened boulders.

Blackened stones
Tear silver shreds in

Streams that slide
Past yellow sand banks.

Silver lambs
With blackened faces
Fall and leap
On yellow colt's foot.

Yellow, black
And silver mingle
Symbolizing
Christian Easter.

CANZONE

CHARLES HIGHAM

To-night there is no perfect end to sleep,
Nor can the moon's white eye drowse in the cloud.
My song is over, and the summer dark has spent
What voice it had where silent breezes crowd
The air's unsounding wells and try to weep.
In the distilled perfection
Of resurrection
My lyre can say no more, my madrigal is spent.

Yet as I leave my house in the cold light
And stand for one short moment at the gate,
It seems that somehow there is nothing time
Can take away from transient beauty, nor can hate
Make bitter the brief wonder of this night,
For it is not quite lost,
Nor shall it cost
More than a smile's regret for lost delight.

If I can sing no more, the birds will sing;
If I can stack no fires, the sun will blaze;
The busy mole deep in his midnight hide
Will labour on through all the summer days,
And if I cannot speak of anything
Life will not end its cry
Nor love cease suddenly
Because time drowns me, and my sorrowing.

REVERSE

TERENCE HEYWOOD

Under a tremulous aspen
  Long I stood,
List'ning to murmuring runnels
That darted from bracken-enclosures
  Down through the wood.

There in the varying sunlight
  Brambles in musters
Offered their fruit, and behind them
A red-berried ash-o'-the-mountain
  Drooped with her clusters.

Rose-bay stood in the openings,
  Butterflies spread,
Mellow hues glanced, but the autumn
All rich in her generous splendour
  Bowed my head.

What were her gifts when I suffered
  Silent and friendless?
Happiness cannot be grappled
Alone; and the vision tormented.
  Sorrow seemed endless.

Then came a thought as I pondered
  Welcoming grief:
Why, in the aspen above me,
Did movement and fervour inhabit
  Each bright leaf?

Was it not ardour for turning
  Round from the dimness
Into the radiant sunshine
That kept all those branchlets of leaves from
  Aspects of grimness?

Soon I perceived that my sorrowing
  Issued from night.
Turning my mind with endeavour,
I brought its dark side to the face of
  Pure, gay light.

WILFRED BARTLETT— INNKEEPER-POET

By W. P. BROOKE SMITH

The landlord of the "Rose and Crown", in the small Devonshire hamlet of Calverleigh near Tiverton, was a poet of unusual promise, but few people knew it, apart from his near acquaintances. His name was Wilfred Bartlett, and when he died in 1948 at the age of thirty-five, his merit was just beginning to be recognized. *The Swinging Lantern** contains poems of unusual refinement and delicacy that reveal a most sensitive nature; and first impressions of a rare talent and acute poetic vision are sustained by the posthumous *Soliloquy in Summer*†, published the year before last.

Intense and prolonged suffering sharpened Wilfred Bartlett's perception of beauty — the everyday beauty of the flowers and birds and streams of the countryside which he loved so well and which the million, obsessed by "getting and spending", passes blindly by.

There is much in Bartlett that reminds us of William H. Davies. Of one of Davies's poems Bartlett said: "I read the poem innumerable times and each reading thrills me afresh. I want to cry out with the poet at the wonder of beauty". But Bartlett aimed deeper than Davies. Behind almost every one of his published poems there seems to be an awareness of, or at any rate a groping at, the ultimate truth of things. He was not content with the simple praise of Nature's beauty — he looked beyond. The last lines of "Down by the limpid water" illustrate this:

> Trembled the water's edge.
> I heard the bright river sigh —
> "Seek ever the ultimate Source of Things
> Lest self, too, die".

In "The Garden Voice" it is as if we can see Bartlett's own spirit striving to shake off its earthly bonds, to germinate and grow into immortality. Here he sees the earth in the grip of winter:

> Silent awhile; but only sleeping. Under a white stain
> Soft tappings in the dark! And in the wind's wake
> O hear the green promise sighing
> A swift end to all dying —
> A still, small voice calling the coiled seed, for spring's sake,
> To cleave the loam and roll away the stone.

It is interesting to know that the loan of a copy of Keats's poems by the schoolmistress who used to live in the cottage next to the "Rose and

* *The Swinging Lantern.* Williams & Norgate, 1947, 2s. 6d.
† *Soliloquy in Summer.* Williams & Norgate, 1950, 6s.

Crown" kindled Bartlett's enthusiasm for poetry; we may recall Keats's own initiation through Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, lent to him by Cowden Clarke. There is affinity of spirit between Keats and Bartlett: both poets suffered from consumption, both had an intensified love of Beauty. Keats, in the cycle of "The Odes", achieves perfection, not only perfection of form, but, in his "Ode to Autumn", a perfect expression of a mood of complete ecstatic abandonment and self-surrender analogous to that experienced by the great religious mystics. And it is something of this ecstatic abandonment that is apparent in Bartlett's work; but, because most of his poems are short and, for the most part, elaborate but a *fragment* of a mood, the reader finds himself demanding to know more of him than is contained in the two slender published volumes. His poems are like the flames of a hearth-fire which leap up and illuminate: they spring from an intense red glow beneath. Did Bartlett leave anything which will explain that glowing faith which kindles his poetry?

The lines I have quoted above provide a clue that will not be followed up in vain: "a swift end to all dying" . . . "a still, small voice" . . . "roll away the stone". These words, with their Biblical echo, reflect a belief in Redemption and Resurrection that is the mainspring of his work. Bartlett fervently embraced what Keats chose to ignore — the Christian promise of Redemption. When he was invalided out of the Navy, he wished to join the Church, but was rejected for reasons of health. The Church Army refused him, too. It was only then that he turned his mind to poetry. He felt he had a message of hope to bring mankind — if only he could reach it. What the nature of that message is a random selection of his verses will reveal. The first is quoted from "Evening Sacrament":

> I taste, a moment, evening's red repose,
> My spirit steeped in wonder charged with prayer;
> Sipping the sacramental wine that gleams
> Wherever dreamers break the bread of dreams.

The next, from "Transfiguration":

> Together we ascend, through clouds of pain,
> The stairway of the stars, till we emerge
> Into the realms where flesh shall have no place.

And a third, from "Deep . . . unto Deep":

> But gazing inward, deep — ah deeper yet! —
> In the soul's bottomless abyss
> I have found peace akin to the bliss
> Of earth and sky and sea's sweet fret;
> When God within me, God without, have met.

A poetry course taken during the war years provided the key that

unlocked his heart, and showed him the way to self-expression which his poetic nature craved.

I believe that many of Wilfred Bartlett's poems, such as "Poem for September 3rd" and "The Stranger" (which he himself regarded as merely an exercise) will survive as anthology pieces on their intrinsic merit. I believe, too, that others, such as "Transfiguration", will survive like the poems of George Herbert for the religious intensity of them. They express the creed of a man who knew intense suffering, suffering which, far from causing that self-pity to which Keats gave way in his last letters, produced in Wilfred Bartlett an infinite compassion for the world of suffering he saw around him — the slums and widespread unemployment of the '30s, the agony of the war years, the suffering of animals, suffering of the sick and dying everywhere. At the height of the war he could stretch a hand of Universal Brotherhood across to the foe:

> O take my hand! Come, search my naked heart
> Stripped of all pride, and bleeding simple trust;
> Together we could build the Tower — apart
> Our thousand Babels crash in futile dust.

Bartlett's poetic faith was no easy, superficial one. Among his surviving papers are sermons dating from earlier years in which, infinitely painstakingly, he builds up his own personal position and expounds, not always with the self-consciousness of immaturity, his personal attitude to God.

The most revealing of his unpublished works that I have read, however, is an essay entitled "The Problem of Suffering", in which he sees pain and sorrow as the road to redemption. It will not rank as a great metaphysical treatise, but, if it ever sees the light of print, it will convey a sincere and intimate message of faith, hope and love to the hearts of thousands of sufferers.

Faith, hope and love — these are the qualities that characterize his poetry. It takes on an added lustre when set against the glowing fervour of a visionary passage from his essay:

" 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom, abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing.'

"As I hear that cry I am fired with all the passion of an old-world prophet. Life and beauty, joy and love will never blossom forth in the parched desert of this suffering world until we dig down for the Living Water which flows in an eternal stream beneath the barren surface. A world-wide unity of souls must make that vision of Love a reality. We must toil and pray and suffer with our God. The Life-stream of his Love will surely triumph if we march together beneath the banner of the Cross; for Almighty Love has power to vanquish principalities and

powers, suffering and death . . . Suffering vanquished! Love triumphant!"

Wilfred Bartlett's last volume of poems was fittingly dedicated: "To all sufferers and especially to my Mother who suffered courageously". Suffering, too, was the theme of a long poem, unfinished and unpublished, on which he was engaged when he died. The world would have been the richer for it; but suffering first kindled the spark of poetry in him and suffering extinguished it, and we must be grateful that his flame shone, if only for a little time, in a world of darkness.

THE DEPARTED

J. R. SMYTHIES

I

I am the silence that moves in stone;
The quiet malice that steals through ancient walls
Has laid its cold reptilian hand
To still my running pulse.
Down some dim staircase and twilit corridor
Deep in the earth sunk cellars,
Heavy with the scent of russet apple rot,
Far from the ways of man, the air is still;
Only the rustle of mice plotting in the wainscot
And the ticking of the beetle round my skull
Fill my dry silence.
The last white flowers burst red and die
In the bitter sands of my deserted mind.

II

But once I breathed in sunflecked cottage walls
Shaken by their seaboots and the soft thunder of the distant surf.
The moving of their limbs and suntouched hair
Weaved warm patterns on the moon-washed floor;
Still their laughter haunts white stone flags
Scoured by the sea and the love in long brown fingers;
Now the long waves curl
Haunting their brittle death
With the pale fields of sleep.

ON VERSE-TRANSLATION

By PAUL SELVER

I

Here are three typical utterances which will often be heard when the subject of verse-translation is broached:

1. "Poetry cannot be translated."

2. "Poetry can be translated only into prose, as they do in France."

3. "Only a poet can translate a poet."

Are they acceptable? Let us inspect them.

As for the first, it is a sweeping statement which can easily be refuted. For there have been, are, and will be, many thousands of readers familiar with the works of Homer, Dante and the Psalmist — other examples will at once suggest themselves — but quite unacquainted with their original languages. True, poetry often loses some of its quality in translation. But surely, half a loaf is better than no bread, provided that the loaf is not mouldy.

Having written this I am tempted to indulge in a parenthesis on the need for a sense of proportion in these matters. Of course, by the very nature of things, a translated work, whether in prose or poetry, must be something different from the original, and at times is very different indeed. Never mind, if the translator reveals a due mastery of, and respect for his language. It is the final result which counts.

Again, I am reminded of some remarks made by Félix Boillot in his ingenious volume *Le Vrai Ami du Traducteur*. He takes a simple French sentence: "Les terrassiers sont en train de déjeuner", and considers how it should be translated into English. "The navvies are having their breakfast" is his suggestion, and he gives himself full marks for what may fairly be regarded as a flawless rendering! But then he proceeds very wittily to show that it is nothing of the kind. I leave my readers to guess the arguments he so convincingly uses . . .

We now come to assertion 2. And by the way, before dealing with it, I should like to insert this apt quotation:

> Poetry ought always to be rendered into prose. Since the aim of the translator should be to present his original as exactly as possible, no fetters of rhyme or metre must be imposed to hamper this difficult labour. Indeed, they make it impossible.

This is a quotation from a volume entitled *Pencillings* by John Middleton Murry (p. 129), and I will come back to it presently.

To resume. The assertion that poetry can be translated only into prose

seems to be based upon the principle that, because it is difficult to reproduce the form and style of a poetical original, the best thing to do is to discard them completely. This strikes me as being, if not downright silly, at any rate not very intelligent. I again pin my faith to the proverb about the relative value of half a loaf and no bread.

And what about "as they do in France"? The answer is that sometimes they do and sometimes they don't. For example, this is how Émile Legouis translated the opening stanza of Donne's "The Sunne Rising":

Fâcheux Soleil, vieux trouble-ébats,
Que nous viens-tu
Semondre à travers vitre et rideau rabattu?
Les amants règlent-ils leurs saisons sur tes pas?
Vilain pédant grincheux, harcèle
L'écolier, l'apprenti qui grogne,
Dis aux chasseurs de Cour que le Roi monte en selle,
Appelle les fourmis des champs à leur besogne:
L'Amour toujours pareil ignore les instants,
L'heure, le jour, le mois, tous ces lambeaux du temps.

Here is the original:

Busy old foole, unruly Sunne,
Why dost thou thus,
Through windows and through curtains call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers seasons run?
Saucy pedantique wretch, goe chide
Late schoole-boys and sowre prentices,
Goe tell Court-huntsmen that the King will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices;
Love, all alike, no season knows nor clyme,
Nor houres, days, moneths, which are the rags of time.

A comparison with the French rendering suggests, I think, that a difficult task has here been performed with taste and skill. Nor is this particular example at all unique. With equal relevance I might have quoted, not only several other items by Émile Legouis, from his book, *Dans les Sentiers de la Renaissance Anglaise*, but also many French renderings from Burns, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Matthew Arnold, Tennyson, Browning, Rossetti, Meredith, Yeats, and Francis Thompson.

On the other hand, consider this:

Comme un homme qui, caché parmi les joncs et les roseaux, hume le rare relent que liasse le panthère où elle dévore sa proie, et qui suivant à la chaude odeur la piste du fauve, est happé par la fraîche gueule, et saigne.

La tête toute engloutie en la chaude et douce gueule de la bête; ainsi l'on suit l'amour, dont l'haleine est plus mortelle, et, soudain, un

piège, et l'on est saisi en enfer, saisi, comme un trébuchet met sa prise sur un passant . . .

What is this? Few, I suspect, will easily recognize these lines as two stanzas from Swinburne's "Laus Veneris", translated though they were by so eminent a practitioner as Francis Viélé-Griffin. Compare:

As one who hidden in deep sedge and reeds
Smells the rare scent made where a panther feeds,
And tracking ever slotwise the warm smell
Is snapped upon by the sweet mouth and bleeds,

His head far down the hot sweet throat of her —
So one tracks love, whose breath is deadlier,
And lo, one springe and you are fast in hell,
Fast as the gin's grip of a wayfarer.

So much for the virtues of translating poetry into plain prose. To be sure, poems handled on this principle simplify the translator's task to such an extent that he can polish off a whole volume in about the same time which a single poem might claim if a serious attempt were made to reproduce artistically every feature of it.

Once more a parenthesis: "Mr. Hayward's prose translation of the first part of 'Faust' . . . is not likely to be surpassed by any translation in verse." Who said that? The answer, I am afraid, is: Matthew Arnold. I will refrain from any comment, but I really must quote a specimen of Mr. Hayward's prose "Faust". Here are the opening lines of the "Walpurgis-Night" scenes:

Mephistopheles: Do you not long for a broom-stick? For my part, I should be glad of the sturdiest he-goat. By this road we are still far from our destination . . .

But enough. And lest it be said that I have chosen a particularly blatant passage, I would point out that other translators, even though they saddled themselves with rhyme and metre, managed to disprove Matthew Arnold's forecast. Thus, Bayard Taylor:

Dost thou not crave a broomstick-steed's assistance?
The sturdiest he-goat I would gladly see:
The way we take, our goal is yet some distance.

Next, the third point: "Only a poet can translate a poet". To this I would retort that anyone who has worthily translated a poet must himself be a poet by virtue of having done so, even if he has never written a poem of his own. The author of the original poem which he translated was prompted, urged, driven to write it by something deeply felt. In the case of the translator it was the keen emotion aroused by the original poem which prompted, urged, drove him to the act of translation which, in

other words, inspired him. A secondary type of inspiration perhaps, but one that can operate very potently.

Having said so much I must add that the great poetical translations are rarely, if ever, the work of the great poets. When *they* engage in this form of poetical activity, their personal imprint is apt to be so marked as to efface that of the original.

I hope that I have now made out a case against the author of *Pencillings* who categorically declared that poetry ought always to be rendered into prose, and that fetters of rhyme or metre make it impossible for him to present his original as exactly as possible. But please observe that I am not proclaiming the universal translatability of poetry. This is a matter which calls for some scrutiny, involving first of all, a glance at the main ingredients of a poem, and I will ask the reader to follow me in this when the next issue appears.

SWIFTLY INTO THE OPEN

(From the Hungarian of Petöfi, 1845)

PAUL SELVER

Swiftly into the open, gaze on the springtide,
And con the stage of nature that is there.
Do you dote upon opera? Hearken yonder
To many a lovely operatic air.

Upon the majestic stage of nature's setting
The prima donna is tiny Philomel;
Who, pray, among you songstresses would venture
To challenge in rivalry her tuneful spell?

There every thicket is a private box
In which young violets take their ease, and they,
The fair sex, all agog, and deeply hushed,
Hark to the prima donna's thrilling lay.

Yes, they are deeply hushed and all agog,
And all are set astir by a glowing thrill . . .
Only those chunks of rock, the old, old critics,
Remain aloofly blank and utterly chill.

VOICES ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

DEATH ON A POLE

ELEANOR GLENN WALLIS

Half way across the field
He swings, suspended in the wind and sun.
Flying he reeled
On air and dropped before the farmer's gun.

Between the fertile rows
He pays his forfeit to a man-made law:
Consider, crows,
The empty beak, the piteous shrunken claw.

(Maryland)

REMINISCENCE

STANTON A. COBLENTZ

Moodily winding up a bare hill-lane
Or peering from a moonlit study room,
I felt in youth the shadow of a gloom
No ray could pierce, no current grief explain.
Vaguely it haunted, like some ancient pain,
The burden of a half-forgotten doom,
Till bit by bit I saw the years consume
The blackness as the sunlight conquers rain.

Yet even now, when some stray rhyme recalls
The spell of that old sorrow, I believe
Unknowingly I looked through clouded walls
To some dark loss that time could not retrieve,
Some earlier life from whose pale stricken halls
A wandering ghost returned to bid me grieve.

(California)

BLAZED TRAIL

STELLANOVA OSBORN

April came and April went
And somewhere in between
You wandered off along a trail
That we had never seen.

Another April comes and I
Am trying not to yearn
To find the broken twig you left
To tell me where to turn.

(Georgia)

FOR THE FINAL FROST

BLANCHE ROBINSON WILLIAMS

Nothing will be left for the final frost,
nothing of all that was
so vibrant once, the sounding hills
green with applause.

The bloom of the alder is shattered and gone
with the bright assault of wind, —
gone with the maple's flame and the burning
tamarind,

Whose branches lie in the beaten ash
hoarding that memorable mile,
when autumn was less than the season, and summer
but the rift of a while.

If aught remains for the final frost,
it is little that you can see —
a vine, perhaps, desolately clutching
a dead tree.

(Virginia)

CARNET DE POCHE

Four poems by Rainer Maria Rilke translated by

HERMAN SALINGER

SOLITUDE

None the harvester, none the savior,
And our hands full of tenderness?
Must we cry to the angels our distress?

Our too-fullness, our no-labor
In their eyes turns to indigence.
Our appeal that skyward slants
Is nothing but a noisy neighbor
Of indifference.

DOUBT

Tender nature, happy nature, where so many
Desires cross, this way and that way bent,
Indifferent, without you, were there any
Basis of content?

Nature too plentiful and in destruction frightful
For all exalted heights and quick extremes,
Where from the rivalry of the vile and the delightful
Balance is born in dreams,

Nature, whose excess kills and whose delicious
Creativity is ecstasy,
Who incubates, annihilates the vicious
With one machinery,

Am I (O tell me, silent one, for I must know)
As but one moment of your fruitfulness,
Part of the chasm of your vertigo
Towards which your nights progress?

Am I with your far plannings in accord?
Am I one shout before revolt grows dumb,
I, who was bread, dropped from the banquet board:
Become a lost and hardening crumb?

DIVINE DISGRACE

It can no longer be through you, too faithless single
Oracle, that I enunciate.
I have tried and tested you; your breathings mingle
All the heart's risks, whatever I dictate.

If there is to be sweetness, it must be your own:
A sugary aftertaste, the saliva dyed:
Slightly seductive, cloying quick, then gone,
Unlike the honey in me multiplied.

Henceforth it must be you alone, the harsh or bitter,
You to resound and yours the blows to feel:
You the prone anvil, I the hammer, the hitter,
But held between us: no more iron or steel.

GROWING OLD

Some summers bring so many fruited things
The farmers never reach to pluck them down.
Have I neglected all your harvestings,
O nights and days, letting you burn to brown
The cindered slow flames of your flowerings?

My nights, my days, what fruit your boughs have brought,
Preserving labor's gesture, all the bends
Of back and thigh and arm are in you caught:
My days, my nights, O you dear rustic friends!

I seek what prospered you, to bless my sheaves:
A sweetness similar that could revive
All my belovèd trees that scarcely live,
Open the petals, flutter wide the leaves.

The fruit is gone. But let one last time come
To spread a vain rich flood of flowers mounting
Unthinking, unreflecting, without counting,
With the free force of a millennium!

(Iowa)

SHAKESPEARIAN EMENDATIONS

(FINAL CHAPTER)

By HOWARD PARSONS

Hamlet No. 5.

II, 2, 192. Polonius to Hamlet—

What do you read my Lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my Lord?—

Ham. Slanders Sir: for the Satyricall slave saies here, that old men have gray Beards; that their faces are wrinkled;—yet I holde it not Honestie to have it thus set downe: For you your selfe Sir, should be as old as I am, *if like a Crab you could go backward.*

About the italicized words in the last line: Verity is of opinion that "It is a clever bit of 'stage business' that Polonius is made unconsciously to point the application by stepping backward." If that has been the "stage business" hitherto, it should henceforth be radically changed: read on. Prof. Dover Wilson says "The old man, as appears from 'if like a crab you could go backward', retreats in fright as the 'mad' Hamlet bears down on him enforcing point after point of the 'satirical rogue' with an accusing finger." Thus, what Verity gives in outline, the Professor provides highly coloured. Very rightly, Malone, Grant White, Cowden Clarke, Staunton, Chas. Knight and F. A. Marshall make no special mention of "stage business", for it was a calm dialogue between an elderly man and (line 168) the "poor wretch" who approached him, *sadly*, while *reading*, and who, at its conclusion, expresses willingness to walk into his grave. The *crab* illustration was attached to a fact, i.e., that if Polonius could have gone backward in years, he could have been as young as Hamlet.

To "suit the action to the word", I suggest that Hamlet should stop on Polonius's entrance and stand still throughout the interview, holding up his book in front of him, as though he were not permitting Polonius's questions to disturb his reading, but occasionally looking up while replying.

II, 2, 506. "The First Player", at Hamlet's request, continues the tale of the Fall of Troy and death of King Priam—

1. Play. But who, O who, had seen the *inobled Queen.*

Ham. The inobled Queene?

Pol. That's good: Inobled Queene is good.

1. Play. Run bare-foot up and downe—

A clout about that head,

Where late the Diadem stood, and for a Robe —
A blanket in th'Alarum of feare caught up.
Who this had seene —
'Gainst Fortunes State, would Treason have pronounc'd?

Editors follow the Quarto, which reads "*Mobled* Queen. Malone says 'mobled' means attired in a large, coarse and careless head-dress." Prof. Dover Wilson calls "mobled" "This far-fetched, and, with its homely association, rather ridiculous word."

Shakespeare's object in this passage was to elicit the audience's sympathy for a most unfortunate woman; Troy, her city, was on fire, its citizens were being slaughtered, Priam, her husband, just killed; and now she "saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs:" The tears streamed down her face and she made "an instant burst of clamour" (line 519) — and the first thing the supposed onlooker records about her is that she was wearing a *clout*! The word "mobled", followed two lines later by *clout*, means she was wearing the clout in *mob*-cap fashion. Had the poet written "mobled queen", he would not have created a tautology by saying she had a *clout* about her head. She might have discarded the clout any moment and the ephemeral description "mobled", had it been made, would no longer have been applicable.

Other unfortunate queens in the plays are termed, respectively, "Most wretched queen" (Pericles), "Queen of sad mischance" (Richard III) and "Forlorn queen" (2 Henry VI). In all these cases Shakespeare thought of their condition and not of their clothes, and Hecuba affords another such instance. The line should read —

But who, O who, had seen the *wofull* queen.

He again described a queen by the same adjective, viz., in Pericles, Prologue to Act IV, line 3, "His woful queen we leave at Ephesus." If we write the two words phonetically, it will be seen how easily the one was mistaken for the other: w o f u l l, m o b u l d.

Polonius was a purist. In line 110 he said "beautified is a vile phrase" and now he expresses approval of "the *woeful* queen"; which he could not possibly have done had the player said "the mobled queen."

II, 2, 519. The First Player continues the story —

The instant Burst of Clamour that she made
(Unlesse things mortall move them not at all)
Would have made *milche* the Burning eyes of Heaven,
And passion in the gods.

Re "*milche*". Malone (quoting Steevens) says "Drayton, in the 13th Song of his "Polyolbion", gives this epithet to dew: "Exhaling the milch dew." Prof. Dover Wilson refers to the same quotation. Staunton says "milche" means "moist". Verity "it is probably a verb, meaning

to flow. Cowden Clarke "Capable of yielding moisture". F. A. Marshall quotes Dryden, "I think no man ever drew milk out of eyes before him." Milch means milk; compare milch-cow.

Dryden's scepticism was justified. Shakespeare wrote:

Would have made *milde* the Burning eyes of Heaven.

As with "milche", in the Folio, an *e* is added to *mild*, as in Taming of the Shrew, I, 1, 71, "Maids *milde* behaviour and sobrietie." *Milde* was very easily mistaken for *milche*; the oval part of *d* in *milde* supplying the *c* in *milche*. Compare m i l d e, m i l c h e. I paraphrase the last line of the quotation "And cooled the ardent gods."

THE ECCENTRIC

STAR POWERS

I am observed
Having many moods:

Each mood
Has a different mode,
Ignoring code,
Each its own degree
Of being me . . .
My common and diatonic spaces
Face only one horizon . . .

I live on several levels,
And to integrate them
Would be the pitied
Point of pain.
To unify, would be
To compromise.

I would be pure.

I am eccentric, and glad
Although to some I may seem mad,
It is only
That each time
Of self-inflicted passion
Has its odd and
Individual fashion!

(Wisconsin)

NOTES FOR NEWCOMERS

By The Editorial Staff

Once upon a time a popular cricket-critic (say it quickly) complained in his newspaper that at one period of the day's play a North-country bowler had been at his very worst, comparing him to the little girl who had a little curl, right in the middle of her forehead —

When she was good, she was very, very good,
But when she was bad she was horrid.

The bowler didn't like this criticism. He was a dour lad who had previously worked down the mine, and he was so cross that when the newspaperman arrived at the ground next morning he greeted him with a scowl.

A few words followed, and they were none too amicable. Then the bowler suddenly blurted out: "And what's more, it dunna rhyme."

"What doesn't?" said the critic.

"*Fore*-yead and horrid," said the ex-miner.

Well, whether it rhymes or not there is plenty of mis-rhyming that is flagrant in the North-country and South-country alike, and readers of contemporary verse are continually being pained by it.

Recent instances have been made a note of, and the Editorial department comments on them to newcomers in poetry; not to be smiled at, but if they are properly studied they should greatly lessen the commonest imperfections or lapses to which poetical aspirants are so prone.

Then came the awful time
When God drew in His line.

The pattern of the poem which includes these lines has given no indication that assonance is being employed; it can, therefore, only be assumed that time-line is sheer insensitiveness to sound. Again:

Passing over shadowy morn
Glimpsing the heavenly dawn.

The verse-writers perpetrating Cockney rhyme at this moment in history are either innocently ignorant or — ? Let us not pursue the point, turning instead to this example of alleged rhyming:

The elements, gentle and harsh,
The dream that is but a farce . . .

(One over the eight?) Next, another alleged rhyme:

And in the wet
The child was blowing his trumpet.

The whole English tradition is against the rhyming of a stressed with an unstressed syllable. So is the natural accentuation in speech. The expert in poetry technique will always take risks, of course, so let the fatuous pseudo-modernist go on blowing his own trum*pet* if he wishes to.

Then there are other faults worth mentioning. We have

— the lark in lyric mirth,
Almost a sightless speck above the earth.

But no more earth-mirth, eyes-skies, bloom-tomb, dove-love, creep-sleep, trees-breeze, please! Wanted, rhyme that is fresh and original, or none at all!

After these rhyming lapses we reach for the blue-pencil:

The bright, the burnished peacock isles of sea.

Cross out at least half the purely descriptive or ornamental words in such passages and compare the stripped version with the original. Adjectives, however heaped up, can never perform the vital work of a sentence; this is done by the verb.

Now for the archaic:

And on its western rim the sun doth shine.

Doth it? Except in regard to the master-poet we venture to suggest that the expletive, the metrical filling out by such ancient devices as *doth, did, do,* betrays at once the fumbling of the amateur. So does the poetic inversion:

Unhealthy minds their miseries dissect.

Which dissect, minds or miseries? And how? By the same miserable method of mechanical inversion? As for italicized words:

You say *your* heart is broken. What of *mine?*

Such, especially in verse, are abominable. Emphasis should arise naturally from the word-order, not from artificial aid. Bad also are slang, colloquialisms and dialect words, which are made even worse by being apologized for in inverted commas. And the late-Tennysonian word "mystic" has a deal to answer for:

Soft down the mystic woodland sighed the wind —

It is as bad as the early Victorian "blooming", which has now degenerated into a euphemism from "bloody". Stock verbal obsessions of our age, befitting its harshness, are bone and stone, blood and skull. So also are the unhealthily clinical, the morbidly psychological — how they have sneaked into present-day verse:

'Tis night, and where so e'er I wander sad
'Neath the bright stars I ne'er discover peace.

How can you expect to discover peace having murdered the Queen's English for the sake of your wretched metre?

Finally, what is gained by printing titles and the initial letter of every verse line in small type? The same applies to those would-be modernists who omit punctuation throughout, even the final full-stop. True poets know well how invaluable is punctuation as an indication how the rhythm of a particular line should be taken, and are shrewd enough to be most fastidious about it. Remember Oscar Wilde to his hostess: "What have you done to-day, Mr. Wilde?" "Oh, I took out a comma this morning." "And what did you do this afternoon?" "I put it back again."

THE GLORY OF SCOTLAND'S SOUTH-WEST

By STEPHEN GRAHAM

Robert Burns, by David Daiches (G. Bell & Sons, 15s.)

Here is a compendium of biography and detailed literary commentary, valuable to the student or to one who is preparing a thesis on Robert Burns. It is restrained and professorial. There are plenty of facts, and 'facts are chiels that winna ding', but it is left for the reader to make Burns live in the imagination. This is not easy. The poetry speaks for itself for those who understand it, but to see the man who wrote the poetry is more difficult.

Burns the man has been built up as a highly respectable farmer who nevertheless loved a wee drappie and had occasional lapses from conventional morality. The poet was in part to blame because he could sober-up, put on a straight face, don his Sunday black, drop his dialect and express himself in stilted English like an utter gentleman. He did it for Scotland's sake: it was not fitting that Caledonia's bard should be the rantin', roarin' Willie of the village pub. But the genius was the man in the work-a-day coat stained by whiskey and beer, the man in the buttoned breeks from which the Ayrshire mud had not been brushed away.

It is surprising that the pious Lowlands, sown with the blood of the Covenanters, should have produced Scotland's voice in poetry. Where Burns lived you could be brought to court for not going to church on Sunday, and if a man lay with a lass the guilty pair had to mount stools of repentance in the kirk, 'mount the creepie chair'. Burns had to do so himself, and not once or twice in his rough island story. He was shamed before his own folk on the eve of his becoming the glory of the south-west. And the paradox continued to signalize itself in the century after Burns's death: the Scots becoming even more censorious and puritanical throughout the Victorian era, but at the same time the identification of Burns's poetry with the soul of Scotland becoming accepted generally. Innumerable sermons were preached against Burns and some morbid and grudging essays were written against him, but the poet replied tacitly from his own verse: 'O ye wha are sae guid yoursel', sae pious and sae holy!'

Professor Daiches gives too much detail of fornication and seduction; it is a mistake to print dirty verses never intended for publication or to talk of 'his sexual urges growing ever more imperious', commonplace detail in the natural history of any male. The poetry, the gift to mankind, is the only thing that matters.

It is the running commentary on the poems often examined line by

line which is the valuable feature of the book. The obscurities of dialect are translated in the margin, which is much better than transferring to a glossary. The student is enabled to grasp how much Burns took from others and how he improved and indeed immortalized what was folksong; he is made to realize the clash in Burns's personal taste.

Had Burns been encouraged he might have written all his poetry in the style of Addison and Gray. He had a sneaking regard for the sheerly English in literature, as for something naturally superior, as a well-dressed man must be thought superior to a yokel. Fortunately for ourselves and for everyone else rapturous encouragement was given to what was natural and unstudied in the poet's work, no matter how uncouth the language of the Scots countryside. As it remains to us, Burns's prose is pretentious like bad architecture; his poetry is natural and God-given, like bird song.

SIX BOOKS WITH SEVEN VOICES

Visions of Time, by Hal Summers, *Converging Moments,* by Juanita Peirse, and *Now Against Winter,* by Frederic Vanson. *The Rout of San Romano,* by Jon Manchip White. *The Journey in Hope,* by Thomas Fassam. *Drift,* by A. J. Bull. *Poems* 1950-51, by Michael Hamburger (*Poems in Pamphlet,* 1952, The Hand and Flower Press, 1s. each).

Here are six more volumes in this gallant venture, each costing one-sixth of what one expects to pay for thirty pages of arresting verse in faultless format. All are traditionalist in the best sense: not writers for whom poetry was unborn before *The Waste Land,* but who begin where the truly great like Thomas Hardy left off, and are sincerely trying to enrich the authentic stream.

Not that they are always experimentally successful and free from contemporary vices. A fine poet like Hal Summers might be wise to question his habit of substituting assonance for rhyme, a device original in Wilfred Owen, but now so modishly imitated as to be commonplace. Or, perhaps, when Frederic Vanson can forget his over-precious Rilke, the genuine elegiac quality of his personal statement may widen into the objective and truly universal.

Mr. Summers includes admirable poems of place like "The Yorkshire Moors" and "Cerne Abbas", exquisitely observes on what he daily experiences, his own children, is powerfully gnomic in "The Seed", and touches the high-water mark in the recently broadcast "A Vision of Time Present".

Juanita Peirse and Frederic Vanson offer a dual effort. The *Converging Moments* are deeply religious and often visionary; they are also blessedly free from the pharisaical sophistication to be found in several fashionable

Anglican women verse-writers. "I am the Door" is a poem of which Blake himself could have been proud. The looser rhythms of *Now Against Winter* subtly charm by their nostalgic longing and harmony of phrase; their fresh and frankly uncynical view of mankind is seen at its best in "For My Son, Sleeping", and "London Bore Me".

To those at home with the medieval, *The Rout of San Romano* will be welcome. The pseudo-romantic paraphernalia, however, honestly meant little to a reviewer faced with the "Atom Bomb". Jon Manchip White is far more effective in the sonnet's discipline and is authentically magical in "The song fell softly from her rounded lips."

Thomas Fassam's volume, *The Journey in Hope,* is a longish pastoral in three parts, composed in blank-verse octaves. It is good, but not as good as the author's previous *My Tongue is My Own.* The rhythm is too end-stopped, too merely Marlowesque, too little later-Shakespearian in those enjambements and subtle shiftings of caesura that the reader's ear longs for. Yet it is masculine, vigorous, and frequently quotable, a quality now extremely rare.

Despite unwarrantable gibes at Wesley and Gray, *Drift* is impressive. The pictorial in A. J. Bull's art finds spiritual kinship with Paul Nash and Claude, and both his "Menin Road" and "The Campagna" are notable. "The Turnip Soliloquises" also shows that modern poetry is recovering laughter; the writer is healthily unlike the pseudo-elect who prefer to pretend that they never compose except when on the rack. And his end-poem, "Lyric", is lovely.

Michael Hamburger's *Poems* 1950–51, are sensitive, flexible, various. The finest piece is "Islands", which has the delicate allure of Debussy and Mallarmé without any indebtedness. A highly successful experiment in rhythmical bravura is "Recital". In both, and in several others, emotion outsoars the intellectual jugglery of the time and fuses into poetry at white heat.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON

A WONDERFUL REFRESHER

Classical Influences on English Poetry, by J. A. K. Thomson (Allen and Unwin, 15s.).

Professor Thomson's is one of those books which I cannot imagine anyone reading without feeling enriched by it and also without feeling the need to read it again, slowly and studiously. Those of us who had the benefit of the, so-called, expiring Classical education, had only time for very little and a very tiny period of it: but the Latin-speaking Middle Ages were not so limited. They were influenced by *all* the Greek and Latin broadcast to them in the Renaissance; and we forget how great an influence that was. A few pages of Cicero or Caesar without

(disproportionate) tears are not enough to counterbalance the names of which a few are to follow.

From Epic (over-used and misunderstood word, of late), which is given liberally in Latin, with excellent translations at the end — or in the text, when notable — we are briskly and alertly guided via *Vergil* (Statius, Claudius) through Boccaccio and Chaucer to our prime imitator Milton, and clearly shown his syntactic and rhythmic reflections of the Master; a process making Milton, incidentally, far more palatable. The *Paradises,* we mean; then Didactic, via Ovid; then Milton again, with *Samson*; and poor Shelley and Matthew Arnold and Swinburne.

Tragedy comes via the Latins to our own Renaissance, with a peculiarly fascinating analysis to display the Senecan influence throughout *Hamlet.* Similarly comedy (which, he emphasizes, was not necessarily at all "funny", but a reflection of life) via Plautus and Terentius — "very different from Aristophanes and Dickens" — to Shakespeare, who created a comedy of his own but was obviously brought up on Terence.

The Lyric section makes the important point that lyrics were originally composed in stanzas danced and sung and deeply linked with Classic scansion, of quantity as opposed to our stress. Read all this twice. For a fascinating instance he takes Milton's "Eternal wrath *Burnt after them to the bottomless pit*" ("can hardly be pronounced fast enough") and Tennyson's "*The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the deep* Moans . . ." (ditto, "hardly slow enough"): whereas all Classical lines last the same period, one long syllable equalling two short. We have a similar form with our ballads, but the elaborate ode came from Pindarus, said by Horatius to have written "in numbers free from law" (a mistranslation of the Professor among others: whose book is defaced by several bad misprints and a few bad solecisms: "freed by law" is the obvious meaning: actually Pindarus is weighed to every syllable long or short like an Aeschylus chorus), whence the "irregular" forms of Cowley and Gray and Dryden. But the predominant influence was that of Horace. The Middle Ages, however, knew little save Senecan choruses, lyrics from Boethius, and Prudentius' *Book of Hours*! Other sections cover Elegiacs, and Epigrams, and Satire, perhaps the most wonderful of all. A perfect occasional book, and a wonderful refresher of rusty Latin! Alas, no Greek!

ARTHUR VIVIAN

A mammoth anthology of 447 British and American "masterpieces" by 150 poets comes from Pocket Books, Inc., New York, *Immortal Poems of the English Language,* edited by Oscar Williams (35 cents). Note the "immortal". Hart Crane, Oscar Williams, and Gene Derwood are given four pages each (who is Gene Derwood?), W. H. Auden six, Dylan Thomas seven, and Thomas Stearns Eliot eight and a half (including the lines "Here we go round the prickly pear, prickly pear, prickly pear"). W. H. Davies and Walter de la Mare are given two pages between them, and Edmund Blunden nothing. Thank you, Mr. Williams, for getting Davies and de la Mare in at all!

WORDS, WORDS, WORDS . . .

The Language of Shakespeare's Plays, by B. Ifor Evans (Methuen, 18s.).
W. B. Yeats; Self Critic, by Thomas Parkinson (University of California Press. Agents: Cambridge University Press).
Christopher Fry: An Appreciation by Derek Stanford (Peter Nevill 12s. 6d.).

How notably and historically these three poet-dramatists link the years between the Elizabeths. Shakespeare the Founder Member, Yeats the Searcher, Fry the Rediscoverer — an absurd compression, simpler to call them word-addicts, adepts in the language of perception and penetration.

Dr. Ifor Evans writes: "As a dramatist he was always in a sort of peril, for language so delighted him that he loved words for their own sake and it was as if they knew his weakness and were ever ready to overpower him. He was in danger as a dramatist of being overwhelmed by the exuberance of his own verbal genius." He was writing about Shakespeare, and many have written in like fashion about Christopher Fry.

Professor Parkinson's thesis is W. B. Yeats's two distinct styles, evident even in the poet's early years and in the alteration of technique caused by his Abbey Theatre experience. "His writing for the theatre affected profoundly his lyric practice. The relation between the Abbey dramas and the later lyrics is crucial and formative," writes Professor Parkinson, and: "When from 1925 to 1933 he turned again to rewriting the early lyrics, he rewrote them in accord with the metrics, diction and persistent patterns of structure characteristic of his later, or dramatic, lyrics."

It is, however, misleading to pursue too far the poet-dramatic theme through the medium of these three studies, for they differ vastly in scope and scholarship. Professor Parkinson pursues the subject matter of his thesis (which favours a viewpoint not customarily held with such exclusiveness) from its conclusion into all the byways that can support it.

Derek Stanford has aptly sub-titled his study of Christopher Fry, "An Appreciation". Unpretentious, save possibly in the portrait, and readable, driving one inevitably back to the plays themselves.

Dr. Evans's volume is the one of these three for poets, one from which their craft can benefit by the discernment of a genuine critic. The time is nearly ripe for a book of the same class on Yeats. Christopher Fry can well wait; for his time, thank goodness, is not yet.

JOHN GRADDON

Poets of promise and poets of achievement still figure in the publishers' lists. Edwin Muir's *Collected Poems,* Geoffrey Johnson's *The Heart of Things,* Patric Dickinson's *The Sailing Race,* and Paul Dehn's *Romantic Landscape* will be reviewed in the next issue of *The Poetry Review.*

FROM THE FRENCH

Francois Villon; Poems translated to the original verse-forms by Norman Cameron (Jonathan Cape, 10s. 6d. net).

The translator says in his foreword, "I have endeavoured to translate Villon's fifteenth-century French into seventeenth-century English, to which it corresponds in maturity, richness and resemblance to the modern tongue". But is this, indeed, true? The present reviewer can find no such resemblance. He also says, "I have seldom used the old French *rime riche*". But why should he refer to it as *old* since its use has persisted down to our own day and is never likely to be discarded? When we come to Mr. Cameron's actual performance we find a failure to give us Villon's poetry in the greater pieces, while he is over-exact in the lesser and more exclusively documentary parts. His very first stanza drags in Latin words twice to eke out his rhymes, and these are neither English nor Villon. Later on we find his outrages on rhyme beyond bearing; "dungeon" with "curmudgeon", "Villon" with "scullion", and the like, pepper his pages. His faults, however, may almost be forgiven for his surprisingly good rendering of *The Lament of the fair Armouress* where he keeps very closely to his text and conveys the tragic self-pity of his original. Whether it is right to name the "charms" of the lady so precisely is matter for debate, even though she herself does so. Realism is all very well, but there is a point at which nausea may intervene, and then a synonymous evasion may be preferred. The temptation of the earlier and less informed translators was to interpret what should have been sardonic in terms too sentimental; but there is a danger in going to the other extreme and ousting all the poetry by over-insistence on the exact and sordid detail of which Villon is so lavish. Mr. Cameron tends, some may think justifiably, to do this, and in so doing certainly shows great skill. In this respect he follows worthily in the footsteps of Dr. McCaskie, who published a still fuller version six years ago, while he controls his scansion much more carefully. Both have followed the native researchers who have enabled us to reconstruct the life of Villon's day and make plausible guesses at the meaning of his many obscure allusions, though each relies mainly on a different authority.

WILFRID THORLEY.

VOICE AND VERSE

Training for the Stage, by Dorothy Birch (Pitman, 18s.).

Miss Dorothy Birch has written an admirable book on training for the Stage. She has covered almost every branch of this exacting profession, in a lucid and direct style. Readers of the *Poetry Review* will turn to the chapters on Voice, Speech, and Vocal Interpretation, which should prove of great value to the serious-minded student whose ambition is to read verse with intelligence and understanding — so often lacking nowadays.

It is a tonic also for the professional actor or actress, who would do well to study the sections on audibility, vitality in speech, and characterization. The latter is a thorny problem for the actor; how far to forget "self" and be "the man". The author has precise and understandable views on this matter, summarizing in one valuable chapter all that Stanislavsky said in several books!

Stressing the value of technique — indeed her subsidiary title is "The Technique of Acting" — she repeatedly warns the student that it must be subordinated to sincerity and sympathy. Good advice; how often have we seen fine performances, but were left unmoved; all head, no heart. The publisher points out that the book is designed primarily for the student of dramatic art. I will go further, and say it is for all persons interested in speech and the theatre.

Donald Wolfit, in his foreword, calls it "a guide to read and to follow". This is true advice. The contents carry conviction and experience, and *Training for the Stage* is a worthy addition to the commendable Theatre and Stage Series by the same publishers.

CHARLES DORAN

BOOKS RECEIVED

(The inclusion of a book in this list does not preclude its subsequent review).

Il Paradiso di Dante, an English version by T. W. Ramsey (Hand and Flower Press, 18s. 6d.).

A New Elizabethan Age, by A. L. Rowse (English Association Presidential Address, 1952. Cumberlege 3s.).

Heroic Poetry, by C. M. Bowra (Macmillan, 40s.).

Personal Poems, by William Buchan (Duckworth, 5s.).

British Popular Ballads, Edited by John E. Housman (Harrap, 10s. 6d.).

Romantic Landscape, by Paul Dehn (Hamish Hamilton, 7s. 6d.).

Shelley, Godwin and their Circle, by H. N. Brailsford (Cumberlege at Oxford, 6s.).

The Galloping Centaur, by Francis Berry (Methuen, 12s.).

The Heart of Things, by Geoffrey Johnson (Williams and Norgate, 6s.).

The Tree of Life, by Nathaniel Micklem (Cumberlege at Oxford, 7s. 6d.).

Training for the Stage, by Dorothy Birch (Pitman, 18s.).

Wordsworth: Poems Published in 1807, Edited by Helen Darbishire (Oxford).

Time's Travellers, by Stanton A. Coblentz (Wilkinson Publishing Co., Texas, U.S.A.).

Omar Khayyam, New Version, by Arthur J. Arberry (John Murray, 15s.).

EDITORIAL LETTER-BOX

MR. STANTON COBLENTZ

Sir,

We, on this side of the Atlantic, do not know who your critic is. No doubt we should. But we do protest against his high-handed review of Stanton Coblentz's *New Poetic Lamps and Old* in the January-February number of *The Poetry Review*.

In justice to this highly respected scholar, poet, and editor, let it be known that he stands for everything that is sane in contemporary poetry. In recognition of his service to the cause of poetry, he has recently been given the 1952 award of $1,000 offered by the Lyric Foundation for Traditional Poetry. In the light of this high honor, conferred upon Mr. Coblentz by his fellow-poets of America, it is inconceivable that his recent book, *New Poetic Lamps and Old*, one of many texts by him on the subject of prosody, can be "pretentious" and "outmoded".

Ruth Crary Clough, President,
Chicago Centre, The Poetry Society.

A TEST FOR POETRY

Gentlemen,

I have been trying to find out the reason why poetry has declined in popularity.

Inevitably a great deal of inferior stuff has been written in traditional forms during the 500 years of its existence in Britain, but this seems to me no justification for the accustomed models and vehicles to be so largely discarded as they appear to be now. It was not about *modern* poetry that Matthew Arnold advised us to attain "a clearer, deeper sense of the best in poetry and of the strength and joy to be drawn from it." Nor was it so chosen in 1909 by The Poetry Society as its motto.

I quite agree that no new form should be denied encouragement, and note The Poetry Society's acceptance of the "modern approach". But would it not be wiser to ascertain first what is a poetic form and put it to the test of a committee of persons, educated in ear to the music essential for verse-poetry?

We are simple indeed if we accept a new presentation without such a test. Also we are simple if we imagine that busy working-people of all classes, accustomed to witness Shakespeare's plays, will concede that there can be any importance in the verse which tells merely of the writer's ruminations, reactions, and mental meanderings in a manner that is hardly different from prose writing!

We must admit the "modern" writing of verse as an interesting experiment, containing analysis and some colourful touches; but there is so

much inequality of sound that we ought not to allow it to be placed as in anyway equal in value to the best traditional verse in our tongue. And this, I think, is the general view also.

I suggest that The Poetry Society should *differentiate*. The *Poetry Review's* Editorial Board should divide the two kinds of poetry into separate sections. The verse-poetry proper, possessing metre, should be put first and the writing of it encouraged to retain, as far as possible, the purity of our magnificent heritage of language. It should show what is *Greater* and what is *Less*, and I am sure this attitude will be respected by your readers.

ARTHUR ROW

Hereford

THE MEMORIAL READING

The Memorial Reading of T. Weston Ramsey's poems by Richard Ainley at the Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, on 4th July, was an impressive and moving occasion. A full audience attended in tribute to the late President and his work.

The Chairman was Thomas Moult, poet and novelist, the Society's new President. His introductory words were brief and vivid. He spoke of the occasions when Poetry and Science join hands. He likened the death of a true poet, as Weston Ramsey was, to the falling of a star. His words were not only those of one whose friend had set out on the greatest voyage, but of a critic who knew the value and quality of that friend's work.

Mr. Moult recalled a moment when Weston Ramsey spoke of poetry and kindred things one night at his Essex country home. The nightingales were singing in the darkness, and their song was in tune with the treasures of mind and spirit that had been voiced within the house, and had echoed in Weston Ramsey's music as he sat at the piano.

After the President's short talk, appropriate music was played. This was introduced at intervals by Doctor Leigh Vaughan Henry between the readings of the poems. The items made a pleasing and harmonious choice.

So did the programme of Weston Ramsey's poetry. Richard Ainley was superb as the reader. He seemed to live each poem — within it, his interpretation being so much higher as a consequence than the most excellent surface rendering. His was a true reading; poetry as it should be presented, and so seldom is. Apart from Ramsey's fine translations, the poems that stand out most significantly in my memory were "Proem", the poetry from the *Suite on the Planets,* "Jupiter", "Uranus", and "Mercury". Then "Tiger" and "Infinity".

Weston Ramsey had made a life-long study of Dante, and is noted for his translations, of which *Paradiso* is now published by The Hand and Flower Press, so ably controlled by Erica Marx.

It is fitting to remind readers of the beauty and profundity of his sonnets, and the dynamic power found in much that was written by this quiet and courteous man who gave so much of himself to the Poetry Society and to poetry, and who was always so appreciative of the work and effort of others.

To foretell the edict of posterity is daring, but I feel I am not too venturesome in my belief that Thomas Weston Ramsey's poetry will live to stir thought and imagination beyond the short lives of our swiftly-moving day.

ODETTE TCHERNINE

TOWARDS PARNASSUS

PREMIUM COMPETITION: REPORT, NEW SERIES, No. 12

By LEIGH HENRY

The entries for the latest of these competitions show hearteningly prolific growth of poetic quality, making selection increasingly difficult. There are inspiriting new tentatives, if not achievements always, in form and idiom. It must be said, however, that while conventional animadversions upon hackneyed manners and metres are refreshingly few, certitude in matter and medium in more independent directions does not always justify itself. There are still far too many affected by the introvert tendency of to-day towards self-pity, more who seek in verse to agonize over the tragedies they have not actually experienced, thus inflating the trivial.

Again, a certain pretentiousness, symptomatic of our age of protracted adolescence, tends to cause some to imagine that a prolix phraseology can make the platitudinary impressively philosophic. Pompous preaching, prosy propaganda social or political — these do not become poetry by the facile device of laying out the prose in regular or irregular rhymes or metres. The slangy interpolation, term, or phrase does not substitute for wit or vitality. It only reduces verse to slick journalese.

So far as attaining the heights of Parnassus goes, those taking these ways never ascend higher than that locality's self-conscious. Such subterfuges often make the Muses derisive, by reducing their voices to a dully-glib patter, Americanese in a stereotyped way, never heard nearer Montparnasse than the publicized Moulin Rouge, or even the Folies Bergères. Equally tedious is the 'Nature mood' sentimentality, where effusion never touches ecstasy any more than Nature is evident to any marked degree in those drearily genteel suburbs filled with residences labelled 'The Cedars', 'The Laurels', 'The Myrtles', and countless other arboreal designations. Indeed — despite the very real upsurge of poetry to-day — these trends suggest a curious suburbanism.

But the healthy infusion of irony and even satire enters also. Though uneven, and overlong for its content, W. V. Wall's "The New Elizabethans" punctures the oozy bubble of prevalent cant, whereby we suffer a ballyhoo which has even reached ballad-form. Apparently, New Elizabethanism is something reach-me-down, to be sported as trivially as the paper caps of American Presidential nomination yahoo-mobs — and as fatuously. Joy for our spoon-fed age; without effort or quality-development, we can measure-up to Shakespeare, Bacon, Raleigh, Burleigh, Bull, Byrd and Morley, Drake, and Walsingham. W. V. Wall pins down unflinchingly the flabby negativism and demagogue moron-flattery of our time. More briefly, Joan Beaumont launches her dart at female materialism preferring others even 'with neither grace nor wit' to 'Poets in Love'.

The arresting element, however, contrasted with the heavier obsessions elsewhere, already mentioned, is the keen sentience, essence of all lyricism, the state of being so much more intrinsic than intellectual preoccupations, or states of mind and the quality of exquisite awareness which this gives to some entries. Mabel Parker has it in her "St. Ives Revisited". It is poignant in Margaret Lees' "Faith". It grows fantasy, voicing the spell of an image throughout a life, in Enid Madoc-Jones' delicately-tinted "Green Willow". It is passionately imperative in its urgent, yet exquisitely tender recognition of the blend of the physical and the psyche, in H. Burnham's "Love". It is luminous, jewelled with the fragile delicacy of a dew-hung vista, in Lois Stone's ecstatically ardent "O Come with Me". But it grows all-pervasively, in that strange coming together of the personal sentience with the awareness of wider, intangible happenings, the mystique of a momentous emergence, in Lois Vaughan Thomas' "After Many Years", with its breath-caught clarity of imagery, its patterned vista of a world visioned in transfigured, barely credulous gladness. It is to this poem that I must make the Premium Award.

LEIGH HENRY

AFTER MANY YEARS

LOIS VAUGHAN THOMAS

After many years
Of the looking that was no looking,
The finding that was no finding,
The living that was no living,
Peace came one morning.

Came all unknown upon an autumn morning
When the orange earth was whistling to the sky,

Round birds flew pingeing up in anxious pairs,
And purple stars peeped secretly in puddles,
One autumn morning
Peace came.

Like the slow wind
Which scatters the clouds that lie about our heavens,
The renegade leaves that clog about our feet,
Leaving a new above and a new below –
Blue avenues where the wheel of the sun may roll,
White paths for the sandals of life we have buckled on –
Like the slow wind
Came peace that morning.

So after many years
We know now forever her face.
It is not the face of a child
Nor that of an old man,
The brow not tensed to resistance
Nor the mouth sunk to acceptance.
It is –
It is a laughing face.
Laughter rang in the earth that morning,
Rang down the wind through the grass
So the partridges knew,
Scalloped the puddles in points
So the crocuses knew,
Flamed the pale blood of the heart
So the pale heart knew.
Laughter rang in the heart that morning,
That morning in autumn
Peace came.

The echoes are ringing there still.

THE PREMIUM COMPETITION

The above competition continues as before with the total entrance fees as prize money which may be won outright by a single competitor or may be divided at the discretion of the Premium Adjudicator. An entrance fee of 2s. 6d. will be charged, and a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed if a receipt is desired. Competitors must observe the following rules:

1. One poem only may be entered by each competitor.
2. The poem must be typed and no stamped addressed envelope will be required unless a receipt is desired. (See Rule 3.)
3. Competitors must retain copies of their poems, as none can be returned.

4. Entries must be addressed "Premium Competition", *The Poetry Review*, 33 Portman Square, W.1.
5. Each poem must bear the author's name and address.
6. Entrants must be members of the Poetry Society or regular subscribers to *The Poetry Review*.
7. The winner of a full Premium or one who has shared the prize twice will not be eligible for re-entry for twelve months.
8. No previously published poem may be entered.

The closing date for the next Premium Competition will be 1st December, 1952.

THE LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS SONNET COMPETITION FOR 1953

The Poetry Society has the pleasure of announcing the fifth Annual Competition in memory of Lord Alfred Douglas for a sonnet upon any subject. One of the two forms adopted by Lord Alfred Douglas in his sonnets, must be used; these are:

For the Octave — 1, 2, 2, 1; 1, 2, 2, 1.

For the Sextet — 3, 4, 5; 3, 4, 5 *or* 3, 4; 3, 4; 3, 4.

The prize of £10, which is generously offered each year by the Marquess of Queensbury, may be divided at the discretion of the adjudicator. The winning poem or poems will be published with the award in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors must retain copies of their poems as these cannot be returned. The sonnets should bear a definite title and not merely marked "Sonnet". Not more than two sonnets may be submitted by each competitor by 30th June, 1953. Address "Sonnet Competition", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear names and addresses of competitors. No previously published poem may be entered.

THE GREENWOOD COMPETITIONS FOR 1952

The Poetry Society is empowered by the executors of the late Mrs. Julia Wickham Greenwood to offer the sum of £20 as the Shirley Carter Greenwood Prize for the best single poem in open competition.

Entries should be addressed "The Greenwood Prize", 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Only one poem may be submitted by any one competitor, the length not to exceed 250 lines; no previously published poem may be entered. The full name and address of the author must be given and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed if return of the poem is desired. If a nom-de-plume is adopted, name and address of sender must be given in a closed envelope bearing the pseudonym. The winning poem will be printed in *The Poetry Review* and may be reprinted at the discretion of the Editor, who may also reserve near winners for publication in *The Poetry Review*.

Closing date is 31st December, 1952.

POEMS OF PLACE COMPETITION FOR 1952

Mrs. A. Dorothy Holmes, a Shropshire member of The Poetry Society, offers £10 annually in competition for poems of place. Competitors who must be members of The Poetry Society, may submit not more than two poems, previously unpublished, of not more than 100 lines. All entries should be typewritten and bear the name and address of the author; poems should be addressed to "The Holmes Prize", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, not later than 1st December, 1952. The judges may divide the prize money at their discretion, and the winning poem or poems may be published in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors are asked to keep copies of their entries as these cannot be returned.

THE HOWARD PARSONS EPIGRAM COMPETITION: 1953

The Poetry Society is empowered by Mr. Howard Parsons, a long-standing member of the Society, to offer the following prizes, endowed by him for an Epigram Competition.

1st prize, 5 guineas; 2nd prize, 2 guineas; 3rd prize, 1 guinea. Entries which should not have been previously published should be marked "Epigram" and should not bear a stamped addressed envelope as MSS. cannot be returned. They should be addressed to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, to reach here not later than 1st March, 1953. The Society reserves the right to extend the closing date of the competition should none of the entries reach the required standard.

ORIOLE POETRY PRIZE

ORIOLE (The Poets Group of the Poetry Society) offer an annual prize of £5 for a poem on a given subject to be announced each March. The subject for 1952 is "Power". Entries must not exceed thirty-two lines. Competitors are required to adopt a pseudonym. This should be written in block capitals on the manuscript and also on a sealed envelope containing the entrant's name and address which must accompany every entry. No Competitor may enter more than one poem.

The winning poem will appear in *Poetry Review*. Do not enclose stamps as manuscripts are not returnable. Closing date 31st July, 1953. Address to: ORIOLE PRIZE, 33 Portman Square, W.1.

THE POETRY SOCIETY JUNIOR VERSE COMPETITION

The Poetry Society have pleasure in announcing the next annual Junior Verse Competition. Schools throughout the country are invited to co-operate in submitting the work of their pupils.

The Competition will be divided into two classes:

(*a*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, age up to thirteen years last birthday. There will be a book prize inscribed by the Poetry Society.

(*b*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, aged from fourteen to seventeen years last birthday. There will be a book prize, inscribed by the Poetry Society and four additional prizes of one year's Membership to the Poetry Society.

The poem may be on any subject. Closing date, 30th June, 1953. Entries to be addressed to: The Junior Verse Competition, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear the names and addresses of competitors and copies should be retained as these cannot be returned.

NEW COMPETITION

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT. In the next issue details will be found of a new Competition, our tribute to a Scottish poet of our time, with a special appeal for Scottish poets and readers.

THE HOWARD PARSONS EPIGRAM COMPETITION, 1952

Report by GEOFFREY JOHNSON

The entries in this competition were not numerous, and with a few brilliant exceptions were moderate in quality. Most entrants seemed to assume that an epigram must be cynical, even trivial, and relied too much on the common Martial device of merely clever word-play. The purer epigrammatic tradition is that of the Greek Anthology, as exemplified by Landor, Housman, Garrod; a good epigrammatist must also be flawless in form.

Without hesitation the first prize goes to G. J. Blundell, who had classical concision and finish as well as a significant theme, and whose other two entries were in the same class of excellence. The second prize-winner is Dorothy Spring, with "Epitaph for an Electrician", and the third prize is awarded to Joan Beaumont for "Prayer of a Precocious Child". Good work was also submitted by Raymond Tong, Celia Randall, and B. R. Gibbs.

POPE AND HOMER

Poor, puny Pope? Oh, that were a misnomer
For one who braved the high Olympians' rage
And put the wide-winged eagle that was Homer
Inside an ornamental English cage!

G. J. BLUNDELL

EPITAPH FOR AN ELECTRICIAN

Here lies a man whose touch made darkness bright,
  Whose constant suns went only seldom west;
He earned his living by dispensing light,
  But ended in the dark like all the rest.

DOROTHY SPRING

PRAYER OF A PRECOCIOUS CHILD

Lord, let me differentiate
  'Twixt simple truth and foolish cult
Before my tastes degenerate,
  And Man pronounces me adult!

JOAN BEAUMONT

POET'S PLEASURE

NEWS FROM THE CENTRES

By the Editorial Staff

In many a bright room in many a suburb — or maybe the town itself — a quiet company of men and women assemble on a certain evening each month, eager for talk, eager to listen to a poetry reading, or for music or a literary discussion. They are enthusiasts for a special purpose: members and friends of one of the groups formed into Poetry Centres, unique in their gaily thoughtful way because the common spirit of the gathering creates an atmosphere wholly foreign to the world they have left behind them. It is the atmosphere that Goethe invoked when he spoke of the Beautiful, the Good, and the True — or shall we say just Loveliness, a word comprehensive in the sense that Fiona Macleod used it; "I seek for Loveliness, not lovely things"?

Of course it is back into that outside world that these poetry-lovers must go when the gathering breaks up, but the atmosphere is not lost. They carry the spirit of Loveliness into their workaday life no less surely — otherwise the evening has been wasted — just as they give their appreciation during the evening and pay tribute to any member poet who has brought exceptional work to read to his group. One of the vital reasons for the existence of *The Poetry Review* is the opportunity offered in its pages to broadcast the doings at these Poetry Centres, which are approved branches of The Poetry Society. Lack of space has prevented the various officials from reporting their activities in any detail until now, but for the future they will be encouraged to submit reports which, while no less concise, are more complete. Their aim, it is emphasized, must be based on the old journalistic principle of making a report interesting to the reader whether he has been present or not, or become a member of the Centre or not, nor ever been in the town to which it belongs.

There are twenty-seven Centres or affiliated groups belonging to The Poetry Society, here and overseas. Following this introduction, which really comprises an invitation to each Centre, a number of Centres are given space to spread themselves at the discretion of the Editorial staff — and subject to those weapons supposed to be mightier than the sword, the pen and blue pencil. To conclude by coining a phrase — "All Centres please copy". The idea, that is, not the wording . . .

EALING

One of the most heartening records of a season's work has come from the Ealing Centre. Perhaps the outstanding event in a memorable series of programmes was the Annual Verse Speaking Competition, which aroused so much interest and enthusiasm that it is now established as a popular event in West London.

The local newspapers gave a lot of space to the occasion in July. Robert Frost and Walter de la Mare were among the authors of the set pieces, and the prize-winners in five classes were Valerie Stott, Graham Morris, Kay Shears, Robert Aldous, John Jardine, Maire Chesterman, and Greenford Grammar School second choir.

A newspaper comment was that the elocution "moved one lady in the audience to try her hand at verse writing", a few specimen lines being quoted about:

> " . . . young voices ringing
> With a fine emotion
> Lovelier than singing,"

followed by an expression of hope that next year we may "hear again this gladness." The paper associates itself with the hope, and urges that the experiment should be

tried of including something really modern among the set pieces, "even if it does mean a small copyright fee. Such fees help to keep poets and poetry alive."

Wise remarks — and there are poets belonging to the Centre who must have echoed them. Poets of distinction, it may be added, including John Bayliss of the *Poetry Review*. Kennedy Williamson has been one of the past season's lecturers, and a poignant memory was a programme by the late President, T. W. Ramsey.

"The Christmas Party" writes Mr. William McDermott, a leading member, "was an evening of complete gaiety," and he expresses the wish that all local people who are thinking of the Christmas now approaching will write to him at 9 Queen's Road, Ealing, London, W.5.

WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE

What a delightful evening was missed by the majority of the population around this Poetry Centre, when, on 3rd July, the poet Alun Lewis was the subject of a lecture! The lecturer was Mr. Kenneth Lillington, and he made his approach very sensitively, both as critic and appraiser. A reading of "The Witnesses", the Festival Prize Poem by Clive Sansom, was well attended the previous month.

A poet of great renown, Wilfred Gibson, is the President of the Centre, which meets once a month on the third Thursday evening. Miss Elsie M. Gittens, the secretary, invites poets and friends of poetry in the district to communicate with her at 28 Oatlands Drive, Weybridge, Surrey.

BURGESS HILL

When you are next in Sussex you might profitably spare a little time at Burgess Hill and visit Mrs. Lambert's restaurant in Church Road — Number Forty-five to be exact. But it must be on a certain day at a certain time, or your kindred spirits in poetry will be missing.

They foregather at the address aforesaid each second Saturday in the month, beginning on 11th October. Miss K. G. Boycott will tell you more about the Centre if you write her at "Twemlow," Jane Lane, Burgess Hill, Sussex.

GUILDFORD

A charming programme of poems about the "Seaside and Countryside" — to give the reading its title — was arranged and conducted by Miss Ann Clark on 2nd July. The audience was large and appreciative in spite of the heat-wave, and those who are sorry that they missed the evening ought to communicate with the Centre Secretary, Mrs. F. E. Coker, 20 Litchfield Way, Guildford, Surrey.

HASTINGS, BEXHILL AND DISTRICT

Good luck to this newly formed Centre! The inaugural meeting will be held in November, and Major E. H. F. Morris, of Belclare, Old Town, Bexhill-on-Sea, is preparing a real Poet's Welcome to all on the neighbouring South Coast who wish to do something more with their leisure time than gulp strong draughts of sea air.

REIGATE

This happy old town in Surrey is a poem itself, so it is natural that poetry should be in the air. How right and proper, therefore, that one of the most flourishing of The Poetry Society's Centres has been established there, with a delightful sequence of autumn meetings to prove it.

Dr. Gilbert Murray's translation of "The Alcestis" was the subject of the June meeting, followed by a programme entitled "Poems of the Sea, Ships, etc." before the Centre

closed down for the summer in July. The September re-opening was marked by a lecture with readings, Clifford Turner being the lecturer.

Chaucer's "Prologue" and "The Knight's Tale": these in Nevill Coghill's translation are to comprise the October subject, and the prospect of festival days to come will brighten at least one dark night in November, when the members assemble to enjoy "A Christmas Anthology".

Meetings of the Reigate Centre are held monthly at The Alton, Alma Road, Reigate. Write to Mrs. M. A. Hicks, those who wish for good talk about poetry, good listening, and good company.

DUMFRIES

Scotland has made an unforgettable contribution to poetry. Is it being increased — or when will it be increased? The answer to these questions may or may not be found in this old Lowland town where Robert Burns used to walk, but it is hoped that the Dumfries Centre may help to frame it.

So, Lowlands, take up your membership. Mr. Irving Miller, 35 George Street, Dumfries, will answer all enquiries.

VANCOUVER

Across the Atlantic and Canada a gallant group of poets and poetry-lovers will shortly celebrate the completion of thirty years in association with this Society — the oldest of our Centres overseas.

Through the years, writes Mrs. Moody Lewis, who as Irene H. Moody is well-known to many readers of the *Poetry Review*, "many members have left to live elsewhere, but generally they have maintained their membership; others have joined as out-of-town members, all serving in their work for criticism, reporting, publication, and helping to increase Vancouver's literary reputation."

The twenty-ninth annual "closing" — pleasant description — was recently held at the home of the director, Mrs. Moody Lewis and by the time this issue appears the new season will have begun. Writers and readers alike are invited to communicate with Mrs. Lewis at "Glen y mor," Erwin Drive, West Vancouver, B.C.

POETRY HOURS AT PORTMAN SQUARE

It is pleasant to recall some notable features at the Friday Readings during the season which ended in the summer. One was the inclusion of programmes by various Centres; Kensington on "Satire" was followed by Buckinghamshire on the county's poets, both being admirably presented. "Poetry with Music" — piano, recorders, etc. — at the Newman Institute next door was contributed by students of King's College and a rich selection by Miss Shuttleworth to support a mystical theme was given by Guildford. In January and April our new Drama Group read Dryden's *All for Love*, Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and Shaw's *A Village Wooing* — excellent "theatre" which Mr. Foley's team read well.

Tragically beautiful was Miss Margaret Rawling's memorial selection of poems at the death of the King. This was followed all too soon afterwards by the Memorial Tribute to our late President. Very welcome on their first appearance were Miss Erica Marx of The Hand and Flower Press, whose noble work on behalf of poetry has been greatly appreciated in the Society; Miss Keltie McLeod, introduced by Mr. Wilton Cole, her voice and harp combining in a charming ballad programme; Mr. Graham Suter who gave us a personal selection; and Mrs. Katherine Eggare and Mrs. Helena Normanton, Q.C., who, sponsored by Mrs. T. L. Adamson, debated on "Who Wrote Shakespeare?".

Appropriately in April Miss Kathleen Penny read Mr. Wilton Cole's selection of poems about the spring, from the Song of Solomon to the Elizabethans, Gerard Hopkins, and Swinburne. I recall especially a charming section on flowers, ending with the sonnet "Beauty", which won the Lord Alfred Douglas Sonnet Competition. The poet was present but his name was not given. An excellent and desirably fresh team of voices reading the poetry of Australia and New Zealand combined in a programme for which we were indebted to Miss Kalka Cash. Not only Gordon Lindsay and the other familiars were included, but also Arthur Russell reading his own "Canterbury Province", and — Katherine Mansfield !

The Hove Centre withdrew the programme of poems they had promised when the Chairman's bereavement in the death of T. Weston Ramsey became known. The gap was filled by Mr. Foley's team who gave us the play by Shaw. Mr. Doran led the Drama Group through Gilbert Murray's translation of the "Antigone" by Sophocles. Then came one of Mr. John Graddon's happy discussions on modern poetry — better remembered as a "quiz". Miss Lesley Deane and Mr. Turner gave us a charming programme of poems as June began, and then Mr. John Strevens spent an hour on the theme "Painter and Poet". Dr. Leigh Henry, in "Whither the Word?" added to the praise of the nineteen-hundreds to which we had first listened when he spoke on the Imagists and Egoists and the Poetry Bookshop. "Work in Progress", arranged by Mrs. Richardson represented the verse of the Oriole (Poet-craftsmen) Group of The Poetry Society. This was especially notable for Mr. Yorke Crompton's delivery of a fine sonnet from "The Unity of Man" —

> God made the planets from a central sun
> And gave to each His nature . . .

There was also some beautiful reading by Alun Llewellyn and Keltie MacLeod.

Our Gold Medallists were as welcome as ever under the sponsorship of Mr. Doran as June ended. The poetry of the United States made a topical programme, especially when Archibald McLeish's ironically doubtful "Land of the Free" was read. "We wonder . . . we don't know . . . we are asking" . . . Ezra Pound and E. E. Cummings were not omitted, and Carl Sandburg's "Chicago" made a fine contrast to the work of Robert Frost and Stephen Vincent Benét.

The season ended in mid-July with a new feature — the reading of the Greenwood Prize-winning poem and some of the runners-up. Mr. W. K. Seymour, the judge, gave an interesting analysis of many of the entries, and the greater number proved to be good verse. Miss Elisabeth Cluer's "Journey towards Ireland", the winning poem, was read impressively, and Mr. Doran's reading of the runner-up, John Hartcup's "Hall of Many Mirrors", was wonderfully impressive. I regard the evening as a most valuable innovation, which it is to be hoped will become an annual event. After all, this is one of our main distinctions.

A. V.

AUTUMN AT PORTMAN SQUARE

The Friday Programmes in the Poetry Society rooms will be resumed on 3rd October, when the President presides at a pre-view of the programmes to follow. Below is a provisional list of these autumn programmes, and members in the London region are urged to bring their friends. Everybody is welcome to the now very popular Poetry Hours.

In November a Special Event will take place at 33 Portman Square. The International Children's and Youth Book Exhibition is coming to this country, and the Poetry Society will sponsor it. Volunteer helpers will be required during the ten days (approx.) of the Exhibition. Listen on Friday evenings for later particulars.

Overleaf is the draft of the Programmes for the weekly Poetry Hour.

AUTUMN FRIDAYS AT PORTMAN SQUARE

"The Battle for Beauty is Never Finally Won"

Here is a list of Weekly Programmes, by the Readings Committee, for Friday evenings, 6-30 to 7-30 approx., between October and Christmas — "Everybody Welcome."

October	3	Pre-View (Trailer) of Eleven Friday Programmes	(arranged by Thomas Moult)
	10	Poetry in Prose and Verse	(Wilton Cole)
	17	Robert Gittings of the B.B.C. and his Work	(Charles Doran)
	24	Reading in Italian and English with T. W. Ramsey's version of *Il Paradiso*	(John Carroll)
	31	Review of the current *Poetry Review*	(Editorial Board)
November	7	"Dr. Faustus"	(Charles Doran)
	14	The Work of Katherine Raine and Ezra Pound	(Yorke Crompton)
	21	Reading from *Europa and the Bull* by W. R. Rogers	(T. Van den Bergh and T. H. Foley)
	28	John Strevens and his Painting and Poetry	(K. Richardson)
December	5	Milton's *Comus* with Music and Voices	(Dr. Leigh Henry and T. H. Foley)
	12	"The Poetry of Africa": a Lecture by Sir Eugen Millington-Drake	
	19	"Everyman"	(Charles Doran)

CALLING ALL CENTRES

And now, before the remaining Centres are briefly listed, here is an important call to their Committees.

It is with pleasure that the Poetry Society announces a series of Regional Visits next year by Sir Eugen Millington-Drake, K.C.M.G., of the General Council, and Mr. Thomas Moult, the President.

Sir Eugen will give a propaganda lecture on Poetry at the Centres, and the President will take the Chair on each occasion.

Sir Eugen Millington-Drake was made a Vice-President of the Poetry Society some years ago in recognition of what he had done to make English Poetry known in the Argentine and Uruguay when he was British Minister and had promoted cultural relations with admittedly good results. He was appointed to the newly created post of Chief Representative of the British Council in Spanish America, 1942–6. Since retiring from the Foreign Service he has lectured at home and abroad, most recently in Africa. Sir Eugen was an Oxford University rowing Blue, and Chairman of the Reception Committee at the Olympic Games in 1948.

The lectures, which must be arranged well in advance, will depend on regional co-operation. Beyond hotel expenses or hospitality the Centres will incur little expense, and admission should be free with perhaps a collection at the end.

Centres are urged not to miss this opportunity of putting themselves on the local map.

For Autumn Publication

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LONGMANS

BOSTON (U.S.A.)

Meetings held monthly. Full details from: Miss Blanche T. Bigelow, 163 Eliot Street, Milton 87, Mass.

BRIGHTON AND HOVE

Enquiries should be sent to the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. T. Weston Ramsey, 89 Poplar Avenue, Hove.

Fixtures every third Saturday in the month at the Glenside Hotel, 65 Grand Parade, Brighton. Readings at 3.15 until 5.30 p.m. Tudor Café attached. Refreshments if desired.

President: Rev. F. Pratt Green, 25 West Drive, Brighton 7.

BRONDESBURY

Readings are held on the first Sunday of each month at 1 Mowbray Road, N.W.6, at 4 p.m. Any further information can be obtained from Miss Silvia Newton, L.R.A.M., at the above address — Telephone: WIL 6405.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Mrs. E. Vaughan, Green Acre, Beacon Hill, Penn, Bucks.

CHELSEA POETRY CIRCLE (Affiliated to the Poetry Society).

President: Dame Sybil Thorndike. *Vice-President:* Miss Margaret Rawlings.

Details of Circle Readings can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 5 Redesdale Street, Chelsea, S.W.3.

CHICAGO (U.S.A.)

President: Ruth Crary Clough, St. Clair Hotel, Chicago 11, Ill., U.S.A.

Founded in 1940, monthly luncheon meetings are held the year round at Lewis Towers, 820 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Luncheon is followed by anonymous written criticism of poems submitted anonymously. Out of town members in California, Idaho, Washington, D.C., etc., participate in the monthly assignments and are mailed copies of the poem criticisms.

FLORIDA (U.S.A.)

President General: Marie Tello Phillips, 6427 Darlington Road, Pittsburgh 17, Pa., U.S.A.

HAMPSTEAD

Meetings will be held on first and third Fridays, 8-9.30 p.m., at 14 Eldon Grove, by invitation of Miss E. Vaughan Jenkins.

IPSWICH

Enquiries should be sent to Miss Kay Turner, at 18 Willoughby Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

KENSINGTON

Enquiries should be sent to the founder, Mr. A. Vivian Burbury, 12 Bassett Road, London, W.10. Meetings are held monthly on a Tuesday evening. Shakespeare readings are also held monthly for those interested, by the allied but separate Kensington Branch of the British Empire Shakespeare Society.

LEEDS

Enquiries should be sent to: Peter Bailey, 49 Cross Flatts Parade, Beeston, Leeds 11.

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Mrs. James McCampbell Russell of 1304 Emerson Avenue, Monroe, Louisiana, U.S.A., is inaugurating a Centre of The Poetry Society and will be pleased to hear from anyone interested.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss H. Haddock, 18 Ashley Gardens, Belfast.

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Enquiries should be sent to: Lake Aske, Esq., 281 Wilford Lane, Nottingham.

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Enquiries should be sent to Mrs. Borden Haverstock, 12 Ogilvie Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

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Members and potential members are invited to communicate with the President, Helen T. Douglas Robinson, 815 Jackson Street North, St. Petersburg 6, Florida. The Centre seeks to promote production of the best in poetry.

SHEFFIELD

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss F. G. Stimpson, 23 Silver Hill Road, Sheffield 11. Meetings: Grand Hotel, monthly.

SOUTHAMPTON

Enquiries should be sent to: Miss Joy Brider, 9 Archers Road, Southampton.

STROUD

For particulars of membership, please apply to the Hon. Secretary of the Stroud Poetry Centre, Miss Mary Martyn, Sunfold, Rodborough Common, near Stroud.

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All enquiries should be made to Mr. Thos. G. Ballantyne of Apartment 2, 101 Bernard Avenue, Toronto. Telephone: M.I. 2976.

INVITATION

Will anyone able and willing to start a Centre in any part of the country please communicate with the Secretary, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

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General regulations governing these auditions may be obtained on application to The Registrar, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, with whom arrangements can be made for auditions for schools, colleges, or private individuals.

POET'S PROGRESS

Report on the 43rd Annual General Meeting of the Poetry Society.

The Annual General Business Meeting of the Poetry Society was held at 33 Portman Square, W.1, on 28th May, 1952. Owing to the death of the President, the Hon. Treasurer was unanimously elected to the Chair. Moving tributes were paid by many members to the memory of the late President, Thomas Weston Ramsey, and to the memory of Mrs. Florence Kyle and Mr. Leslie Greene.

The Hon. Treasurer in making his report surveyed the financial difficulties of the Society. He summarized the activities of the Society for the past year and said that thanks were due for an immense amount of voluntary work carried out by members and particularly mentioned Mrs. T. L. Adamson for providing flowers for the readings and for many other services; Miss Bangay for her untiring work for the Critical Service; Dr. Leigh Henry for organizing the readings for children; Sir Eugen Millington-Drake for overseas introductions; and Mr. A. V. Burbury, who filled a gap as Voluntary Librarian. Also he paid tribute to the Centre Organizers and Secretaries, to Miss Margaret Rawlings for the Royal Memorial Reading, and to all members of the Readings Committee; Miss Lesley Deane, Mrs. Kathleen Richardson, Mr. Wilton Cole, Mr. Yorke Crompton, Mr. Charles Doran, and Mr. T. H. Foley. Special praise was due to the teachers and examiners who have supported the Society's Auditions and helped in attaining record figures of audition entries. Miss Cracroft, Miss Begley, and the staff, and Mrs. Price, the Housekeeper, as is their custom, served the Society with a diligence and loyalty beyond praise.

He proposed the appointment of the firm of Messrs. Godwin & Taylor as Auditors for the coming year, and spoke of their unfailing surveillance in the affairs of the Society.

In return a vote of thanks to Mr. Graddon and the outgoing Council for their work on behalf of the Society was warmly applauded.

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